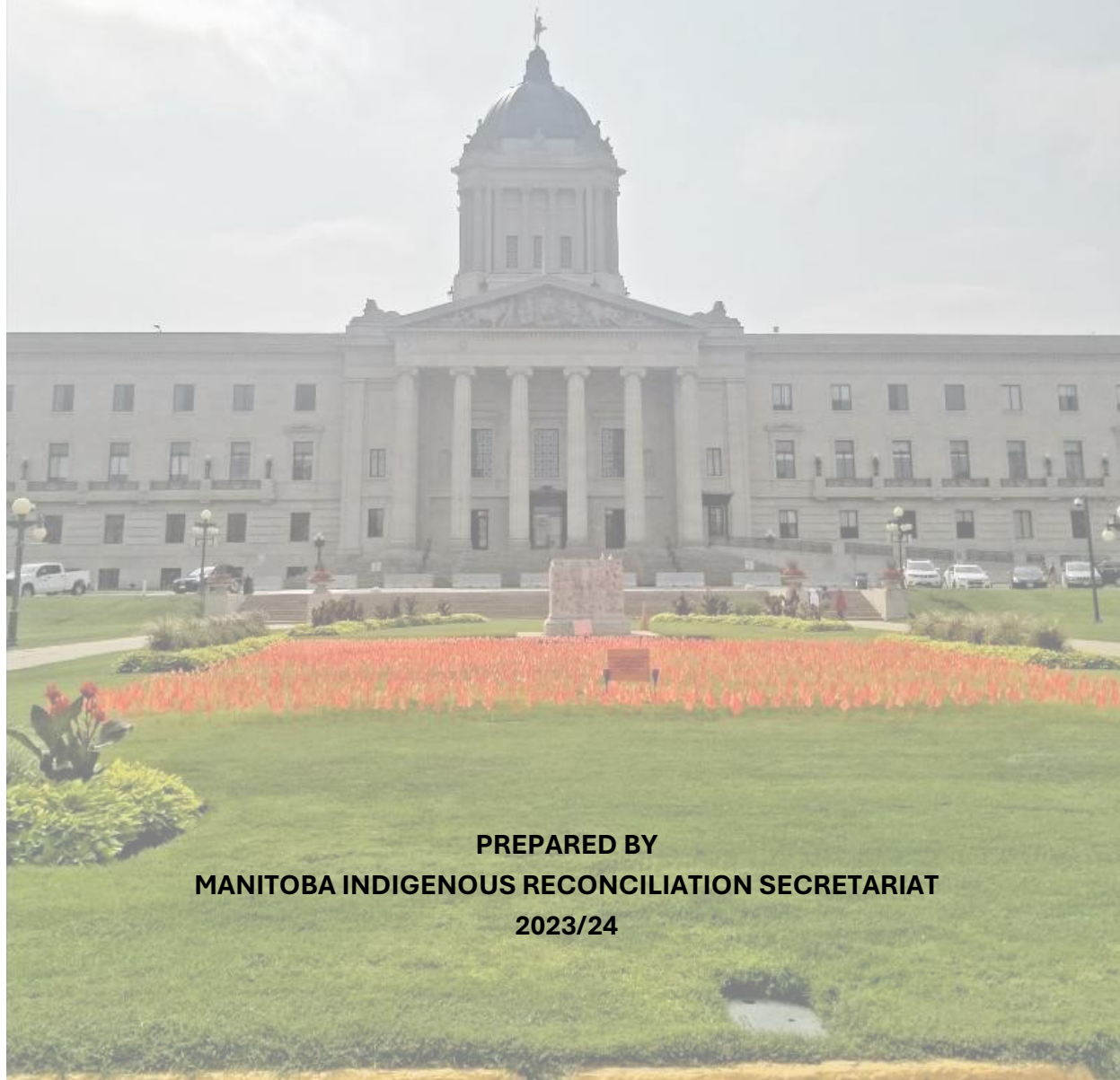


# **THE PATH TO RECONCILIATION ACT**

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## **ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**



**PREPARED BY  
MANITOBA INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION SECRETARIAT  
2023/24**



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## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the Treaty Territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations.

We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the national homeland of the Red River Métis.

We acknowledge that northern Manitoba includes lands that have always been the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

This report was prepared in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Historically, Winnipeg has always been a place of convergence – of the Red, Assiniboine and Siene Rivers, and the Indigenous peoples who relied on those waters for their livelihood, sustenance and mobility. Winnipeg is on Treaty 1 Territory and is home today to more than 40,000 First Nations people from many different communities. Winnipeg is also the birthplace of the Métis Nation, the heart of the Red River Métis homeland, and nearly 50,000 Métis live here. Further, hundreds of Inuit who have come to Winnipeg from Inuit Nunangat, whether to access services or pursue opportunities, have made Winnipeg their home.

Winnipeg's drinking water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. Winnipeg also receives electricity from generating stations in northern treaty areas, and we take this opportunity to acknowledge the impact those projects have had on Nations across Manitoba over many years.

The Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat staff who prepared this report work to engage, respect and focus on understanding Indigenous people here in this location and across the lands and waters of what is now the province of Manitoba. In all things, we hope our contributions and efforts contribute positively to the lives and experiences of Indigenous Manitobans. We are grateful to be able to do our work in this place and we commit to taking meaningful actions on the path of truth and reconciliation.

## Acronyms Used in this Report

Full Text	Acronym
Assiniboia Residential School Legacy Group	ARSLG
Child and Family Services	CFS
Indian Residential School	IRS
Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program	IYMP
Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat	MIRS
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak	MKO
Manitoba Métis Federation	MMF
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People	MMIWG2S+
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	RCMP
Southern Chiefs' Organization	SCO
Truth and Reconciliation Commission	TRC
Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities, who use additional terminologies	2SLGBTQQIA+
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	UNDRIP

## Executive Summary: The Path to Reconciliation in Manitoba

The Path to Reconciliation Act recognizes that Manitoba is situated on the traditional lands and territories of the seven Indigenous Nations: the Dakota, Dene, Cree, Ojibway, Anisininew, Métis, and Inuit. The Act also recognizes that Manitoba continues to benefit from the historical relationships, contemporary cultures and treaties with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous nations, while Indigenous peoples in Canada have shown tremendous resilience making many important contributions to society, while also being subject to a wide variety of systemic and ongoing abuses. The Act draws on principles established in the *Calls to Action* from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the *Calls for Justice* of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The Act provides government accountability for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to build trust, affirm historical agreements, address healing and create a more equitable and inclusive society. Part of this accountability includes reporting annually on progress towards advancing reconciliation in Manitoba.

This report is based on the actions taken by the Manitoba government between October 18, 2023, and March 31, 2024 (referred throughout this document as “the reporting period”). Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat summarizes these actions in this, the ninth Path to Reconciliation Annual Progress Report.

Under new leadership, Manitoba has taken action to promote Indigenous Nationhood, which means supporting the development of Indigenous people, culture, language, and land in Manitoba. To reflect the significant shift in Manitoba’s approach to truth and reconciliation, the following report has similarly been reshaped, and readers will note the change in structure that now highlights the four pillars of Indigenous nationhood: land, culture, language, and people. This includes fulfilling the throne speech commitment to create an Assistant Deputy Minister position for Indigenous Excellence in Education, a position that was filled in January 2024.

Indigenous Manitobans seeking health care are often faced with barriers to culturally appropriate care and needing to travel long distances to receive treatment. Manitoba is fixing the health care system to support more Indigenous Manitobans to receive care closer to home. Manitoba has implemented mandatory cultural safety and anti-racism training for staff in all public service delivery organizations. Manitoba has also created

specific staff positions to provide culturally appropriate care, such the Indigenous Nurse Navigator position at Cancer Care Manitoba. Additionally, Manitoba strengthened its existing programs to improve access, like expanding the My Health Team in partnership with Opaskwayak Health Authority to offer mental health and addictions services in Opaskwayak Cree Nation.

Work is also underway to improve health, safety and educational attainment for Indigenous children and youth, and ensure more Indigenous children in Manitoba thrive beyond their 18th birthday. To achieve this goal, Manitoba is collaborating with Indigenous leadership to return child and family services (CFS) jurisdiction to Indigenous nations. A significant milestone was funding Peguis First Nation with over \$10 million for CFS delivery. Manitoba also partnered with Indigenous organizations to help young Indigenous Manitobans access social services including mental health supports, peer supports, and substance use and addictions services.

The Manitoba government has begun preparing a coordinated, strategic response to the MMIWG2S+ crisis by establishing the MMIWG2S+ and Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet, as well as a Matriarch Circle to advance the empowerment and safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2Spirit peoples. More broadly, Manitoba has also launched initiatives to protect Indigenous Manitobans from violent crime, while subsequently ensuring fair and just treatment before the law. This includes improvements to First Nations policing programs to increase the number of participating communities, allow officers to enforce provincial statutes and bylaws, and allow matters to be resolved through restorative justice or other community-based justice models. Manitoba also worked to help victims of crime, including partnering with the federal government to invest \$27.5 million over five years to provide rental housing benefits for survivors of gender-based violence. Importantly, upon taking office in October 2023, the new government reversed the previous decision of the province and announced it would conduct a humanitarian search the Prairie Green Landfill for the remains of two First Nations women believed to be there. In a sacred commitment to the two families, the Honourable Premier conducted a pipe ceremony with the families as he also apologized to them on behalf of both the government and compassionate Manitobans more broadly.

The Manitoba government is working to integrate Indigenous stories into the broader history of Manitoba, including initiatives to honour Survivors of Residential Schools. Legislation was passed in the reporting period to recognize Orange Shirt Day as an annual provincial statutory holiday on September 30, and to recognize Louis Riel as Manitoba's first Premier. Manitoba also supported several organizations across the province to

commemorate Indigenous history through events or publicly accessible installations, such as the monument to commemorate the resilience and legacy of Assiniboia Residential School students at the site of the former residential school. Manitoba also advanced mandatory training for provincial government staff on the history of Indigenous peoples in Manitoba, with a specific focus on residential schools. And finally, Manitoba supported multiple cultural events and collaborated with communities and organizations to incorporate Indigenous culture into museums, parks and other public spaces.

Partnerships are vital to the work of reconciliation and this report also highlights key achievements in several areas such as economic reconciliation and housing. This includes a joint commitment with the federal government to invest up to \$60 million in OneNorth – a partnership between local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities that owns and operates the Churchill Gateway System, including the Hudson Bay Railway and Port of Churchill as Indigenous-owned resources and assets. Manitoba is also providing \$19.5 million to support Indigenous housing development projects and committing an additional \$5.7 million as part of a phased approach to support Manitobans experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless, with a focus on Indigenous women, youth and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals.

Initiatives featured in this report reflect the first steps of a refreshed, whole-of-government approach towards reconciliation. Significant work remains to restore balance to Crown-Indigenous relationships. Manitoba is committed to make meaningful and positive changes as we walk together on the path of truth and reconciliation.



## Background

On June 2, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released its report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, which included 94 *Calls to Action* directed at governments, churches, organizations and all Canadians. The TRC released its final report on December 15, 2015.

In March 2016, the Manitoba Government passed The Path to Reconciliation Act, with unanimous support in the Manitoba Legislature. The Act set out the government's commitment to advancing reconciliation, guided by the TRC's *Calls to Action* and the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

In June 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its final report and 231 *Calls for Justice*. The Path to Reconciliation Act was amended in 2022, to include the *Calls for Justice* as further guidance for Manitoba's reconciliation efforts.

As described in The Path to Reconciliation Act ("the Act"), efforts towards reconciliation must be guided by the principles of respect, engagement, understanding and action. Additionally, the Act establishes a requirement for the Manitoba government to monitor, evaluate, and report annually on actions taken to advance reconciliation, including measures taken to engage Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples in the reconciliation process.

Reconciliation involves an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining mutually respectful and beneficial relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. In 2023, a provincial election ushered in a new government and The Honourable Wab Kinew became Manitoba's first-ever First Nations Premier on October 18, 2023. Premier Kinew was also sworn in as Minister of Intergovernmental Relations and Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation at that time, sending a message to Indigenous leaders across Manitoba that Manitoba will recognize and engage them in respect of their roles, as leaders of people and leaders of nations. Under the new government, the province began laying the foundation for new initiatives and partnerships to advance truth and reconciliation in Manitoba, while taking steps to optimize and improve existing programs and frameworks.

This refreshed perspective on truth and reconciliation is reflected in the structure of this year's Path to Reconciliation Act annual progress report. This year's progress report aims to provide a more transparent narrative, telling the story about the Manitoba government's efforts to advance reconciliation, and its commitments for the future. The report reflects a whole-of-government approach to reconciliation and signals a new direction in Manitoba.

## A Note on Terminology

In the context of this report, ‘Indigenous nations’ and ‘Indigenous peoples’ are inclusive terms for the original nations and peoples of North America and their descendants, which include: First Nations, Métis, and the Inuit. The term, ‘Indigenous’ has come to replace ‘Aboriginal’ in recent years, but some pre-existing programs still use the term ‘Aboriginal’ in their naming conventions. The term, ‘Aboriginal’ is also still used in some legal contexts, referring to people with specific legal rights under s.35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The reference to ‘Indigenous nations’ and ‘Indigenous peoples’ is an inclusive term, but many recognize and acknowledge the unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs of the distinct nations and peoples.

The *Constitution Act, 1982* recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indians (more commonly referred to as First Nations), Métis and Inuit.

**First Nation(s):** Status and non-Status Indigenous peoples in Canada identified by different cultural, nation or linguistic groups. For example, First Nations linguistic groups in Manitoba include Cree, Ojibway, Dakota, Anisininew, and Dene. The term First Nation came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the term ‘Indian,’ which many find offensive due to its incorrect origin, and connections to discriminatory and colonial policies under the *Indian Act*. “Status” refers to First Nations people who are registered on the Indian Register pursuant to the *Indian Act*. “Non-Status” refers to people who are descended from and identify as First Nations but are not entitled to registration on the Indian Register pursuant to the *Indian Act*. Some non-status people may, however, be members of a First Nations band.

**Métis:** A person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. This definition was adopted by the Métis Nation in 2002. In 2003, the Supreme Court Decision in *R. v. Powley* referenced this definition and affirmed that the term Métis does not refer to all individuals of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry. The distinct language of the Métis is Michif.

**Inuit:** Are the Indigenous people of the Canadian Arctic, or Inuit Nunangat (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador). The word Inuit means ‘the people’ and the word Inuk is the singular term for Inuit. Inuktitut is the Inuit language.

## Message from the Premier and Minister for Indigenous Reconciliation



Since being sworn in as Premier, I have sent a clear message to Indigenous leaders across the province that we recognize them for who they are: leaders of governments. Our government intends to build strong government-to-government relationships and address long-standing inequities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitobans. We will do things in a good way in our province and this report describes the place from which we begin this shared journey.

Since coming into office, our government has worked to bring people together, with you and your wellbeing at the forefront of our decisions. That is why I appointed myself the Minister for Indigenous Reconciliation. I believe this is an incredibly important portfolio and I immediately implemented a whole-of-government approach to reconciliation that centres around strengthening the provincial government's relationships with Indigenous communities and governments.

Advancing reconciliation is a collaborative effort. This is why we have been working closely with all provincial departments as well as external partners, like Indigenous governments, communities, and industry leaders to improve the outlook for Indigenous people in the province. Towards those efforts, in my first six months in office and as the Minister for Indigenous Reconciliation, I hosted and participated in 25 meetings and 14 events with Indigenous leadership and key Indigenous organizations across Manitoba. These connections strengthen government-to-government relations and provide important opportunities for the province to hear directly from Indigenous leaders and discuss ways to advance shared priorities. Our goal is to cultivate respectful relationships with Indigenous nations and to aide them in the development of their lands, cultures, languages and peoples.

The following pages describe some of the extensive work underway to achieve real progress on reconciliation. This is a priority area for government, not only within the Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat (MIRS), but across all departments as we begin this new chapter in our journey together. As you will see in this progress report, following the October 2023 election, we acted quickly to follow through on our commitments to truth and reconciliation. This includes working with Indigenous nations to reduce the energy burden experienced in First Nation and Métis communities and overcome barriers to participation in energy efficiency programming and sustainable economic development projects. Further, we are strengthening relationships and supporting programming to enable the transfer of child and family services back to the

nations and families where it belongs, while reducing the number of Indigenous children in care. We have followed through with our commitment to conduct a compassionate search of the Prairie Green Landfill and pursued a coordinated response to the national crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S+) through the MMIWG2S+ and Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet.

As work continues to advance reconciliation in Manitoba, we will continue to seek opportunities to partner with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leadership to fulfil our commitments in advancing reconciliation as laid out in The Path to Reconciliation Act.

I am proud of the work we have already initiated and accomplished but there is so much more ahead, and I invite you to join us on this journey.

Sincerely,

Wab Kinew  
Premier of Manitoba  
Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation  
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

# The Path to Reconciliation Act

## The Minister's Requirements Under the Act

<b>Progress report</b> <b>5(1)</b> For each fiscal year, the minister responsible for reconciliation must prepare a report about the measures taken by the government to advance reconciliation, including the measures taken to engage Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples in the reconciliation process and the measures taken to implement the strategy.	<b>Rapport d'étape</b> <b>5(1)</b> Pour chaque exercice, le ministre chargé de la réconciliation établit un rapport sur les mesures prises par le gouvernement pour faire progresser la réconciliation, notamment celles visant la participation des nations et des peuples autochtones au processus et la mise en œuvre de la stratégie.
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# The Four Pillars of Indigenous Nationhood

## Land

*Land provides and is the root of Indigenous survival. It is a source of wealth but often a flashpoint of conflict and the basis of colonization. All our needs – food, shelter, clothing, culture and spirituality – are taken care of by the land. An understanding of land and our place within it is embedded in Indigenous culture, language, and history. Indigenous people hold a deep connection and relationship to the land. Understanding one's own role and responsibilities in this relationship informs ethics and environmental stewardship.*

The following section describes several efforts undertaken by Manitoba to advance reconciliation through lands and resources. Advancing reconciliation is a whole-of-government effort that requires contributions from all areas, as well as broad changes to how the province operates.

Manitoba has been engaging on and planning multiple initiatives to advance economic reconciliation and protect the province's lands, waters, and natural resources. Additionally, Manitoba continues to incorporate Indigenous history into public spaces, including sites commemorating Residential School survivors and protections for those who did not make it home.

### Public Spaces to Recognize Indigenous History

To meaningfully incorporate Indigenous stories into how Manitobans understand the history of Manitoba and Canada, opportunities to commemorate Indigenous history in Manitoba – including the history of residential schools – must be made publicly available. Manitoba has supported and launched multiple initiatives to create opportunities to commemorate and understand the history of Indigenous peoples in Manitoba. Highlights include:

- Supporting Assiniboia Residential School Survivors in the formation of the Assiniboia Residential School Legacy Group, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and preserving the legacy of residential school Survivors. In 2023/24, the group created a permanent monument to commemorate the resilience and legacy of the institution's students on an 8,000 square-foot section of former school property on

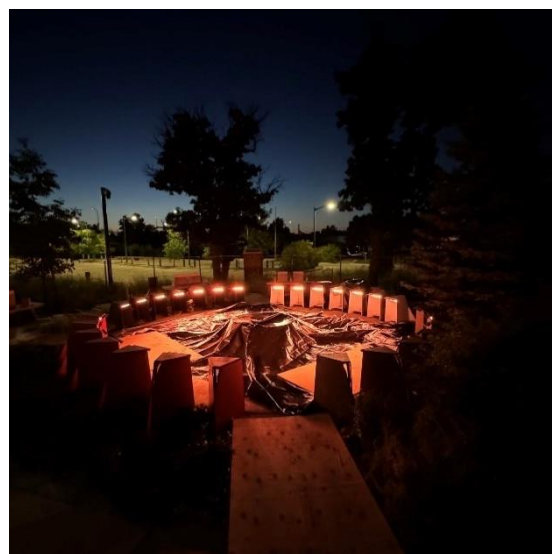


Figure 1 ARSLG Monument

Academy Road, which the City of Winnipeg has renamed Theodore Niizhota Fontaine Park (Figure 1).

- Supporting the creation of public spaces that include and honour Indigenous culture, stories and traditions such as:
  - Providing \$10 million to the Manitoba Métis Federation to support the development and opening of the Red River Métis National Heritage Centre.
  - Assisting Société métisse historique du Manitoba to develop a business plan for the conversion of Vermette Park into an eco-cultural interpretation site.
  - Supporting Festival du Voyageur's feasibility study for the construction of a new welcome and education building focused on Franco-Métis culture in Manitoba.
  - Investing \$500,000 towards the development of a commemorative statue at the Manitoba Legislative Building honouring Chief Peguis and the Peguis-Selkirk Treaty.
  - Supporting Sprague and District's historical museum to construct a building to conserve and exhibit a collection of First Nations and Métis artifacts to enhance understanding of Indigenous history, peoples and culture in the region.
  - Undertaking the relocation of the Kwagwiltz totem pole on the south lawn of the legislative grounds. The totem pole was gifted to the Manitoba Government on July 20, 1971, to commemorate the centenary union of the Province of British Columbia with Canada.
- Advancing the co-development of multi-jurisdictional Indigenous-led approaches, and a government-wide response to identify, investigate, protect, and commemorate children who died while attending residential schools across the province through the Maamawi bigiwewininaanig ginijjaanisinaanig Indian Residential School (IRS) Council. This includes the establishment of an IRS commemoration sub-committee, an IRS Manitoba Technical Gathering sub-committee and an Interdepartmental working group on residential school burials.
- Developing resources to enable Manitobans that want to learn more about the history of Indigenous peoples in Manitoba and their historic relationship with the Crown, including:
  - Enhancing the Historical Museum Association of St. James-Assiniboia's virtual cultural heritage offerings (e.g. music, Indigenous oral history and traditional skills workshops).
  - Continuing to develop a high school elective course on Land and Treaty Relationships and Responsibilities.

## **Advancing Economic Reconciliation**

Economic Reconciliation can take many forms, from building Indigenous governments' and organizations' capacity for economic participation, to partnering on large-scale projects that create wealth for Indigenous peoples and diversify and strengthen Manitoba's

economy overall. The Manitoba government has led several initiatives to advance economic reconciliation, including:

- Undertaking Crown-Indigenous consultation processes on The Environment Act licensing proposals for mining projects.
- Maintaining the Indigenous Elder In-Residence term position in the Department of Agriculture to incorporate traditional knowledge into modern food systems, and to support the production of sustainable, local, and culturally appropriate food within communities.
- Participating in community events to learn about First Nations' traditional food systems and understanding cultural aspects of food security. The Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership (Sustainable - CAP) program supports activities and actions such as engagement, training, planning, capital investments and growing Indigenous Food Systems and enterprises.
- Launching two new programs under the Indigenous Agriculture and Relationship Development, as a priority area of Sustainable CAP:
  - Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems
  - Indigenous Relationship Development and Engagement
- Making significant investments into the Hudson Bay Railway, which is essential for supply chains, local food security and regional connectivity. Its unique community-ownership model represents ongoing steps toward economic reconciliation in Canada.
  - In February 2024, Manitoba and PrairiesCan announced joint funding of up to \$60 million to OneNorth - a partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in northern Manitoba and the Kivalliq region of Nunavut that owns and operates, through Arctic Gateway Group, the Churchill Gateway System, including the Hudson Bay Railway and Port of Churchill as Indigenous-owned resources and assets.
  - Funding will be used to rehabilitate the Hudson Bay Railway, redevelop the Port of Churchill, and further benefit the communities and economic sectors of the north by creating the opportunities for trade diversification and create an enticing environment for investment by both the private sector and other jurisdictions. Manitoba government's investments in the Churchill Gateway System, in partnership with Arctic Gateway Group—the operating arm of OneNorth—will allow for facilitation of Indigenous businesses, trade, and job growth in the regions in the vicinity.

Manitoba has committed \$5M in funding, \$1M per fiscal year over the life of the 5-year funding framework agreement to these Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership programs.



- Providing \$300,000 in funding support to Indigenous Tourism Manitoba in March 2024. Funding was used to support initiatives to increase the number of Manitoba Indigenous owned and operated tourism businesses.
- Continuing to administer the timber dues revenue sharing program, providing a total of \$1.6 million to seven First Nations in Crown revenue collected from timber harvesting.

### **Indigenous Collaboration on Lands and Resources**

Manitoba has taken steps to reset Crown-Indigenous relationships in Manitoba to add more collaborative elements to the management of our lands and resources. This includes engaging on opportunities for the shared management of protected and conserved areas, and working with Indigenous nations to ensure environmental concerns are adequately addressed. Initiatives in this area include:

- Amending the Agricultural Crown Lands Leases and Permits Regulation to expand eligibility to Indigenous organizations and implement Treaty Land Entitlement considerations for agricultural crown lands to support Indigenous agriculture.
  - First Nations rights holders of the proposed regulatory amendment were informed and invited to participate in the 45-day public engagement process.
- Advancing consultation on the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels project to protect all potentially affected communities from flooding and committing to resetting the relationship with Indigenous nations in the region who feel their concerns and voices have not been heard.
  - During the 2023/24 reporting period, Manitoba hosted five Environmental Advisory Committee meetings with nine Indigenous nations and groups for the proposed Outlet Channels project.
  - Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure is also developing a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the project. Two meetings have been held with eight Indigenous nations and groups to discuss heritage resource matters associated with the proposed project, providing an opportunity to express their input on a draft notification protocol on heritage resource matters for the proposed project.
- Partnering with four First Nations on the 2 Billion Trees Program, a program unique to Canada with three streams of planting projects, including general forest renewal, Indigenous forestry, and urban forest management.
  - In 2023, the program's kickoff saw 1,380 large potted trees planted in 20 communities, and four Indigenous planting projects of over 50,000 trees completed throughout Manitoba.

- Continued to support natural resource economic development in Norway House Cree Nation through the two-year pilot initiative launched in 2022/23 to increase forestry related opportunities (\$180,000 allocated in 2023/24).
- Committing to working with Indigenous partners, local residents and the business community to develop a real critical minerals strategy that provides good jobs for rural and northern Manitobans while building a low carbon future. Manitoba managed the implementation of the Manitoba-First Nations Mineral Development Protocol, providing a framework on working with First Nations to establish mutually agreed-to consultation processes for mineral sector projects. This includes finalizing a new consultation protocol with Northlands Dënesųłiné First Nation.
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Canada and the Indigenous-led Seal River Watershed Alliance to conduct a feasibility assessment in January 2024, for the Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected Area proposal (Figure 2). Work continues on the feasibility assessment and includes ongoing engagement with communities.
- Continuing the \$1.235 million two-year contract with the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources to facilitate the co-creation of a framework for a new co-development watershed approach to licensing Hydro developments.
- Enhancing Manitoba's commitment to a stronger consultation process through the addition of new dedicated positions focused on collaboration and partnerships with Indigenous nations, as well as developing inclusive approaches to natural resource management. The department consulted with First Nations, Métis, and other Indigenous communities where proposed decisions or activities had the potential to adversely affect the exercise of an Aboriginal or Treaty right.
- Making progress toward strengthening Manitoba's Crown-Indigenous consultation processes to ensure the meaningful participation of Indigenous communities.



*Figure 2 Draft Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected Area*

### **Improving Connectivity for Indigenous, Remote and Northern Communities**

Many Indigenous Manitobans reside in northern and remote locations, which have historically been at a disadvantage when it comes to the availability of infrastructure and services. The Manitoba government is working to increase connectivity in these

communities to ensure all Manitobans have access to the same quality of life available to those in urban centres. Progress in this area includes:

- Announcing [a \\$21.5 million multi-year project](#) focused on repaving approximately 30 kilometers of provincial roads that traverse through and connect both Norway House Cree Nation and the Northern Affairs community of Norway House. This project will respond to concerns raised by multiple First Nations communities over several years. The project also includes the restoration of provincial road (PR) 373.
  - Other road projects that will benefit northern and remote Indigenous communities include improvements to the road between Wasagamack First Nation and airport, improvements to the Shamattawa Winter Road, the Fisher River flood mitigation project, the PTH 1 twinning project, and the restoration of PR 373.
  - The Manitoba government will also invest in Provincial Road 283 to upgrade Roads and Transportation Association of Canada loading support between the Saskatchewan boundary and Provincial Trunk Highway 10 (The Pas), and truck-to-rail transloading to make trade through the Port of Churchill dynamic. This upgrade will substantively influence interprovincial and international trade and ensure economic development in Indigenous communities in the vicinity of the Hudson's Bay rail and the port.
- Supporting Indigenous communities in preventing and effectively responding to fires, boil water advisories, and other emergencies. Manitoba participates in an Emergency Management Assistance Program table to develop a First Nations-led emergency management model for Manitoba.
  - In 2023/24, Manitoba Wildfire Service conducted 16 emergency firefighter courses for 12 Indigenous communities and trained 226 firefighters. These additional wildland firefighters will support suppression efforts throughout the province and will bolster community protection.
- Supplementing the fire prevention program called Smoke Alarm for Every Home (known as the Safe Families Program) by providing an additional \$50,000 to purchase smoke alarms for six First Nations.
- Delivering an emergency reporting training webinar in March 2024, for drinking water system operators in Indigenous communities. The purpose of the training was to improve regulatory compliance and ensure public health protection.
- Renewing the Brochet-Barren Lands partnership in November 2023, to support ongoing collaboration in northern Manitoba between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The partnership improves access to timely water sample testing through a local Indigenous-approved testing facility, reducing delays in shipping water samples from remote/northern/isolated water systems, and enhances capacity to ensure a safe drinking water supply in communities.

- Supporting Manitoba Environmental Industries Association to deliver its first Wastewater Operator Assistant course for four participants in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation and celebrated six graduates from their Indigenous Housing Quality Analyst Program.
- Expanding the Northern Patient Transportation Program to provide coverage to more people living in northern Manitoba where accessibility to health services can be more difficult due to remoteness. This ensures First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the north can access essential health care services.

Significant work is underway to ensure reconciliation efforts extend to the management of lands and resources across the province in collaboration with Indigenous communities. This includes continuing to assess and develop Crown-Indigenous consultation and engagement processes to support meaningful participation and encourage ongoing two-way dialogue with Indigenous nations. This is an ongoing process that requires the commitment of all departments to create a healthy, connected, and economically robust province that benefits Indigenous peoples as the original stewards of these lands.

## Culture

*Culture is the foundation of respectful engagement and defines the good life, or **mino-pimatisiwin**. We learn our way of being through stories, Elders, families, and communities. Indigenous culture encompasses all aspects of life and is essential to the overall well-being of Indigenous individuals and their communities. Maintaining traditional beliefs, practices, and culture is not only a crucial part of identity, but it is how Indigenous people rebuild relationships within and across communities.*

Manitoba has been working with Indigenous partners to find new ways to celebrate Indigenous achievements throughout history, promote Indigenous culture in schools, acknowledge the past and create opportunities for Manitobans from all walks of life to honour and commemorate residential and day school Survivors, their families, and their communities. Manitoba has also sought to ensure a culturally appropriate and family centred approach to the MMIWG2S+ crisis is at the forefront of the provincial response.

Addressing culturally competency and bias in healthcare ensures when Indigenous patients seek healthcare in Manitoba it will meet their cultural needs. By doing work to transfer jurisdiction to Indigenous-led policing services, Manitoba is striving to evolve the culture of policing by opening the door for more culturally grounded services that work to transform a dynamic that has often been experienced as oppressive and has resulted in a tense and difficult relationship between Indigenous communities and the police, whose stated mission is to both protect and to serve the community and its people.

## Acknowledging and Commemorating Indigenous History

Commemorating Indigenous history promotes truth and reconciliation by integrating the stories and achievements of Indigenous peoples in Manitoba into the broader history of the province and in response to the TRC's *Calls to Action* 79 through 83. As affirmed by UNDRIP, the truth about what happened in residential schools must be made known. The Manitoba government recognizes that to advance Indigenous reconciliation, all Manitobans must understand the history of Indigenous peoples in Manitoba and Crown-Indigenous relationships. Initiatives to raise awareness and assist in advancing this goal include:

- Amending the Employment Standards Code, The Interpretation Act, and The Public Schools Act to ensure all Manitobans can observe Orange Shirt Day (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) as a provincial statutory holiday on September 30.
- Funding Indigenous-led conferences to support individuals affected by Residential and Day Schools ensures truth in the accounting. Funded events include:
  - the Sixties Scoop, Residential and Day School Symposium held by the Manitoba Métis Federation to share stories, hold cultural activities, and discuss reconciliation efforts and healing.
  - The Protecting our Ancestors Conference held by MKO and Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, which addressed the need for protections for Ancestral remains and belongings.
- Digitizing Norway House school registries in the Archives of Manitoba and beginning the digitization of attendance records. Copies of these records will be shared with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Introducing and passing legislation recognizing Louis Riel (*Figure 3*) as the first premier of Manitoba, honouring Riel's legacy and contributions to the foundation of Manitoba. [Riel's portrait plaque](#) has been updated to reflect his status as Manitoba's first premier and original head of government. This achievement serves as a demonstration of Manitoba's commitment to highlighting and celebrating Indigenous achievements as a central part of the province's history.
- Offering several ongoing courses, workshops, seminars, experiential learning opportunities, and other offerings to encourage Manitoba public servants to enhance their cultural competency and historic awareness.



*Figure 3 - Louis Riel and Council, 1870*

- Designing and administering “Our Shared Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation,” a mandatory course for all public servants in the provincial government, covering historical events ranging from early colonization to residential and day schools. The first module of this course emphasizes historic awareness as an essential step towards reconciliation and respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples. Three additional modules are currently in development and include content which will also be made mandatory for all public servants.

## Promoting Indigenous Cultures in Schools

Manitoba is developing new ways for Indigenous cultures to be incorporated meaningfully in schools across the province. Examples include:

- Engaging with early learning and childcare organizations to develop an Indigenous Education Policy Framework to ensure culturally appropriate programming and supports for Indigenous children and youth.
- Providing \$65,000 in annual funding to Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP). In January 2024, [Manitoba announced an additional \\$545K to expand the program to 25 additional communities and schools over the next three years](#). IYMP is based on Indigenous education and positive youth development models that address holistic health outcomes and align with Indigenous approaches to life promotion (Figure 4).

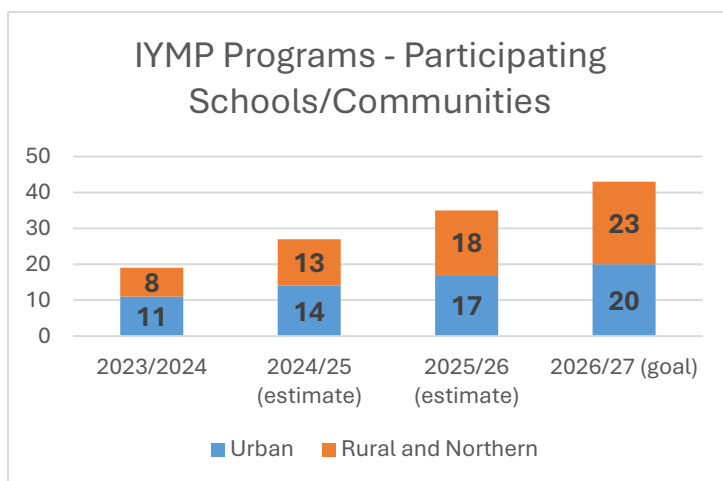


Figure 4 - Growing number of Manitoba schools participating in the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program

- Purchasing 2,000 Treaty Education Resource Kits, which were distributed in February 2024, to all provincially funded schools. Treaty education supports teachers, school, divisional staff, and students’ understandings about the original spirit and intent of treaties and the importance of the treaty relationship to create safe and inclusive places of learning.

## Supporting Culturally Enriching Events

Manitoba provides funding for events, activities, and organizations that honour and share Indigenous cultures, history, and traditions, while bringing community together. A few examples of the events and initiatives that were supported include:



- The Founding Nations of Manitoba weekly Pow Wow Club, which includes teachings on the community's history, traditional songs and dance, as well as a New Year's Pow Wow to bring Indigenous community members who are unable to return home for the holidays together in one celebratory place.
- Installation of Indigenous artwork in Park La Vérendrye.
- To celebrate the city of Winnipeg's 150th anniversary, funding was provided to the Winnipeg Arts Council so they could collaborate with an Indigenous artist to create public art that celebrates that Indigenous cultures are integral to Winnipeg's identity.

### Supporting Indigenous Artists, Athletes and Entertainers

Artists, athletes and entertainers support Indigenous culture by preserving Indigenous stories and art forms, increasing the visibility of Indigenous peoples in mainstream media, and inspiring youth. Supports in this area include:

- Investing a total of \$75,000 in 2023/24, to support the development of Indigenous athletes through major sport events. Sport Manitoba invested \$15,000 in an Anti-Racism in Sport campaign to develop anti-racism training modules for provincial sport organization partners.
- Supporting the Manitoba Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Council to publish a photo book titled: *A Summer of Excellence*, honouring the success of Team Manitoba at both the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships and the North American Indigenous Games (Figure 5).
- Supporting the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sports Achievement Centre North program, bringing together youth from communities across Northern Manitoba to develop leadership skills and community development strategies that will have a positive impact in their communities while building sustainable community programming.
- Continuing to fund arts and entertainment organizations including the National Screen Institute and Manitoba Film and Music to offer programming specific to Indigenous artists and entertainers.



Figure 5 - The Summer of Excellence photo book

- Partnering with Creative Manitoba to deliver an Indigenous Music Development Program for 54 participants, and a variety of workshops, programming and consultations for Indigenous participants.

## **MMIWG2S+**

Addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis is a priority for the Manitoba government and a key piece of creating a safer, healthier province. Manitoba emphasized the importance of proceeding with a culturally appropriate response to the crisis as part of the provincial response. After the new Manitoba government was established in October 2023, immediate steps were taken to organize a broadly inclusive and collaborative solution to this ongoing crisis, including:

- Creating the Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat (MIRS), which has provided advice and expertise on the compassionate search of the Prairie Green Landfill for the remains of two First Nations women. MIRS also assisted in establishing an internal project team and provided funding to Long Plain First Nation, Giganawenimaanaanig, and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs during the criminal trial to support the families of the missing women.
- Creating a Matriarch Circle that will work to identify key priorities and recommend strategic approaches to advance the empowerment and safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2Spirit people. The Matriarch Circle is comprised of diverse representation from accomplished Afro-Indigenous, Anishinaabe, Anisininew, Cree, Dakota, Dene, Inuit and Métis women, youth and gender-diverse relatives. [The first gathering of the Matriarch Circle](#) was held on March 21, 2024.
- Re-establishing the MMIWG2S+ and Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet, and appointing a [special advisor](#) on Indigenous women's issues who also serves as secretary to the Cabinet committee. The government's new special advisor was also tasked with leading the development of Manitoba's MMIWG2S+ provincial strategy, focusing on the prevention and safety of MMIWG2S+ and the empowerment of Indigenous women, girls, and 2Spirit people.

## **Cultural Competency and Addressing Bias in Health Care**

Ensuring cultural competency within the health system is a crucial step in meeting the *Calls to Action* set out by the TRC. In addition, it ensures appropriate delivery of health-care services that meet the cultural needs of patients. Addressing bias involves recognizing the harmful role of bias and providing training for recognition and management of bias.



The Public Health Agency of Canada developed a helpful infographic to illustrate the Continuum of Cultural Safety and Humility (Figure 6).

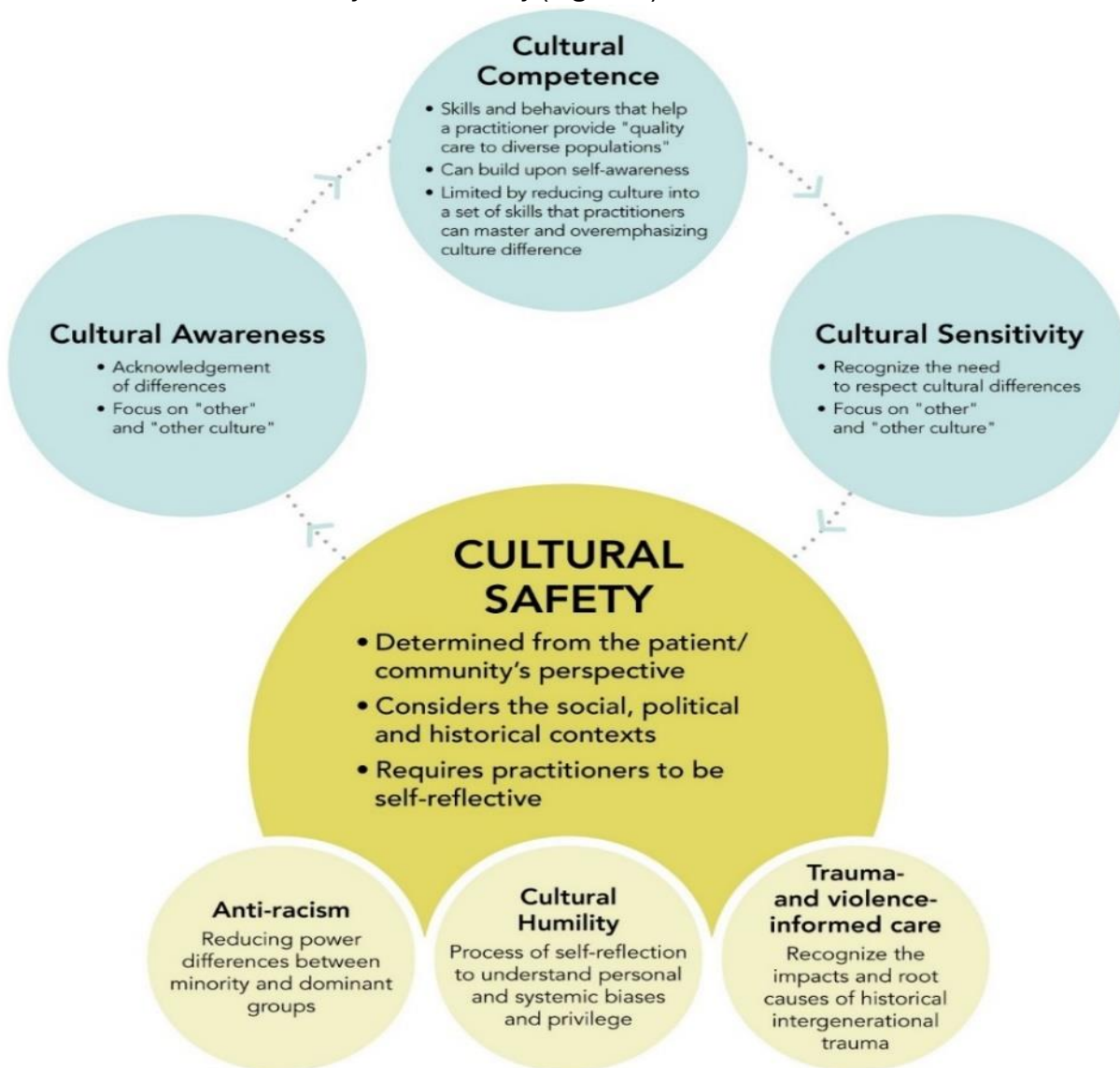


Figure 6 - Public Health Agency of Canada (2023). "Common Definitions on Cultural Safety: Chief Public Health Professional Forum."

A March 2023 survey of Manitoba health service delivery organizations showed that the Manitoba government needed to improve cultural competency among staff and addressing bias in health care to create a better, safer environment for Indigenous Manitobans who were receiving and providing healthcare (Figure 7). Manitoba has several initiatives that aim to increase cultural competency and safety while addressing bias:

Racial Climate Survey Report (2023) fast facts:

- 44% of survey respondents had not participated in any Indigenous awareness programs in the past five years
- 43% of Indigenous, Black and Racialized respondents agreed that racism was a problem in their workplace

Source: [Racial Climate Survey](#)

Figure 7 - Data from the Centre for Healthcare Innovation, 2023.

- Hiring the first Chief Operating Officer for Indigenous Health in the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority as a designated Indigenous-specific leadership position
- Hiring the first Indigenous Nurse Navigator in Cancer Care Manitoba to support culturally responsive, trauma informed and person-centred care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. Cancer Care Manitoba has also built an [Indigenous Community Profiles](#) website which is available for clinicians to find important information about First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities.
- Creating culturally-minded spaces for smudging ceremonies on site in health care facilities in the Interlake Eastern and Prairie Mountain Health region.
- Expanding the Patient Advocate program in Prairie Mountain Health by hiring four patient advocates to assist and support Indigenous clients through the provision of culturally safe health care.
- Working with the Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing at the University of Manitoba's Rady Faculty of Health Sciences to provide cultural safety training for both Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and Shared Health employees.
- Interlake Regional Health Authority led a provincial Disrupting Racism Steering Committee to develop an anti-racism action plan that includes policy intervention when racism is experienced or witnessed, cultural awareness and trauma informed care training, anti-racism tools and resources for management, and organization-wide Indigenous education.

### **Supporting Indigenous-led Policing**

First Nations Safety Officers (FNSO) and the Manitoba First Nations Police Service are an integral part of the layered policing model in Manitoba and provide public safety in their communities. Transferring law enforcement jurisdiction to First Nations helps incorporate cultural values and knowledge into the work of law enforcement. Manitoba reiterated its recognition of First Nations policing jurisdiction across the province, including through the following initiatives:

- Increasing the range of First Nations Policing across the province. Amendments to The Provincial Offences Act and The Police Services Act were proclaimed to enable First Nations' bylaws to be enforced by issuing tickets and enhancing the Community Safety Officer and FNSO programs as a part of a layered public safety model. These amendments make First Nations laws easier to enforce and provide opportunities to resolve matters through restorative justice or other community-based justice models, while expanding the scope and authority of community safety officers and FNSOs to enforce provincial statutes and bylaws.

- Expanding the FNSO program to include the communities of Dakota Tipi, Lake St. Martin, and Sandy Bay, bringing the total number of participating communities to 42.
- Supporting the requested transition of two First Nations policing services (Gambler First Nation and Brokenhead Ojibway Nation) from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to the Manitoba First Nations Police Service. Manitoba has been an active member of the transition team and has advocated for additional federal funding to support this transfer of jurisdiction.
- Continuing to leverage proceeds of the sale of seized criminal property to protect Manitobans and enhance public safety. Manitoba, through its Criminal Property Forfeiture branch, has provided funding to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Winnipeg Police Service, Manitoba First Nations Police Service, Brandon Police Service, Crime Stoppers, and Rossbrook House to work alongside Indigenous communities to provide youth outreach, victim services, and to support efforts to address the ongoing MMIWG2S+ crisis.
  - Through the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund, Manitoba also supported the Winnipeg Police Service to engage Indigenous leadership and communities on forming an Indigenous advisory council, which will provide guidance to the Winnipeg Police Service to promote and monitor culturally appropriate, trauma-informed practices.

## **Indigenous Workforce Skills and Training**

Creating educational and employment opportunities for Indigenous Manitobans does not only enrich the lives of individuals and their families, but it also strengthens Manitoba's workforce as a whole and brings diversity of perspectives to classrooms and workplaces. Manitoba has been collaborating with industry and educational facilities to increase access to advanced education, skills training and employment for Indigenous Manitobans:

- Allocating \$259,000 to continue supporting the development of an Indigenous public service workforce plan that advances truth and reconciliation, coordinates efforts across departments and responds to overall diversity and inclusion efforts within Manitoba's public service. These efforts respond to recent recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General in their audit of Manitoba's implementation of *The Path to Reconciliation Act*.
- Operationalizing a steering committee and working group to review the scope and progress to be achieved through the Memorandum of Understanding between Manitoba and the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development Inc. In 2023/24, 35 Indigenous clients were supported by the department to attend education and training in pursuit of greater self-sufficiency, independence and long-term sustainable employment. Top training programs included welding, heavy equipment operator,

building operations technician, and social innovation and community development. Over 55% of clients who were contacted following their participation in training reported that they were employed.

- Through the Sector Council Program, increasing partnerships between industry and Indigenous communities through programming, workshops and engagements:
  - Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters held five Indigenous Advisory Council meetings, promoted careers to 104 Indigenous youth through workshops, and delivered Indigenous cultural literacy training to 43 participants of manufacturing companies, including human resource and executive staff, to understand structural barriers facing Indigenous communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*.
  - Training to support human resource development needs of construction companies through their Indigenous Engagement Strategy.
  - Manitoba Aerospace Inc. held an Aerospace and Aviation in Manitoba day for 188 Indigenous youth and participated in the Indigenous Aerospace and Aviation Showcase for 110 Indigenous candidates, hosted by the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development Inc., to highlight the education, training, and employment opportunities in the local aerospace and aviation industries.

Culture is an important part of Indigenous nationhood; it is a way to preserve history and foster a sense of belonging. Manitoba is continuing to develop new ways to support artists, arts and cultural professionals, Indigenous knowledge keepers and arts and cultural organizations. Manitoba also recognizes the importance of taking a cultural lens with significant initiatives such as MMIWG2S+, healthcare and Indigenous-led policing services. Looking forward, Manitoba will continue to support Indigenous cultural initiatives across the province and incorporate that cultural lens into services that touch the lives of Manitobans.

## Language

*Language is not only a tool of communication, but also the way Indigenous people preserve the rich culture, unique customs, and the important history that embodies a worldview built into the language. Indigenous languages are the voices of the land; they give context to where we exist in the world and saving them is vital to the cultural identity and dignity of Indigenous people.*

The Truth and Reconciliation's *Calls to Action* 13 through 17 call on governments to acknowledge, preserve, revitalize and reclaim Indigenous languages. Manitoba recognizes that language is an important aspect of Indigenous Nationhood.

## Promoting Indigenous Languages

Manitoba is committed to strengthening Indigenous languages and cultures by exploring new initiatives and supporting organizations that provide these services. The Manitoba government is developing new ways for Indigenous languages to be promoted in meaningful and accessible ways. Examples include:

- Appointing [an Assistant Deputy Minister of Indigenous Excellence in Education](#) in January 2024, to provide advice to government on a variety of Indigenous and equity-based policies and research related to Indigenous education and training, equity and inclusion. This position prioritizes the incorporation of Indigenous languages and worldviews in education.
  - The Indigenous Excellence office is working on a recruitment and retention engagement strategy to increase the number of Indigenous language teachers, and planning supports for Indigenous language immersion programs.
- In November 2023, a two-day symposium was held to provide Manitoba educators with opportunities to learn and share experiences incorporating Indigenous languages, and worldviews into their teaching practices. One of the directives contained in the department's Indigenous Education Policy Framework involves 'Putting Students at the Centre,' and therefore, the symposium created space for youth to share their perspectives.
- Manitoba actively participates in the Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy (MALS) membership table. Staff attended three meetings and a conference within the reporting period and attended the MALS Symposium in February 2024.
- Identifying and indexing Hudson's Bay Company Archives records right with documentation of Indigenous peoples to support research into Indigenous names that were changed or lost over time.
- Supporting Portage la Prairie's Community Revitalization Corporation's Indigenous Puppet show featuring Indigenous puppeteers sharing aspects of Indigenous culture and language.

## Promoting Indigenous Languages Through Translations

Manitoba is Increasing the visibility of Indigenous languages in the public sphere by translating more materials in Indigenous languages to promote a better understanding of projects and services. Translation projects are planned for the next fiscal year, and the following are a few translations that have begun this initiative:



- Establishing a memorial garden on the south lawn of the Manitoba legislative building to commemorate the children who died while attending residential schools, featuring signs translated into six Indigenous languages (Figure 8).



*Figure 8 - Memorial Garden at the Manitoba Legislative Building*

- Continuing Manitoba's Indigenous Community Sign program, which displays the community's name in the Indigenous language of the community. These signs were installed for the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and the Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation.
- Providing information sheets in Indigenous languages for large scale natural resources projects in Indigenous communities to further support Indigenous communities' understandings- for instance, for the proposed Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels project.
- Creating an internship program within Winnipeg Regional Health Authority to train and recruit permanent interpreter resource workers to support Indigenous language access in health care.

Work on language supports has continued outside of the reporting period. During this period, planning began for the development of an engagement strategy with Indigenous rights holders, school divisions, educational institutions, and stakeholders to promote

Indigenous languages and worldviews. By enhancing supports for Indigenous languages in Manitoba, we can ensure that future generations can experience the diversity of Indigenous nations across the province, and honour the wisdom embedded within Indigenous knowledge systems.

## People

*People are at the heart of reconciliation; initiatives described within this Nationhood pillar are focused on ensuring that people in Manitoba live the good life. This includes working to eliminate gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitobans in areas such as Justice, health, education, and child welfare.*

Some noteworthy efforts to bring the good life within reach include Manitoba's people-centred approach to address issues that disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples in Manitoba, including gender-based violence, access to housing, and Indigenous over-representation in the justice system. Work under this pillar also includes health supports, including mental health and addictions supports. Initiatives to improve educational outcomes, wellness and safety for Indigenous youth are also included in this section, including work to return jurisdiction to nations for child and family services.

### Working to End Gender-Based Violence

Both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* and the *Calls for Justice* from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls highlight the need for coordinated, collaborative efforts to end gender-based violence. Manitoba is working to establish protections for individuals at risk of gender-based violence, as well as supports for victims and survivors. Initiatives in this area include:

- Continuing to co-design regulations under The Disclosure to Protect Against Intimate Partner Violence Act (known as "Clare's Law") in partnership with Women and Gender Equity Manitoba (WAGE). Clare's Law ensures persons at risk of intimate partner violence and/or family violence can access official information about their partner's known history of violence and be connected with community-based supports.

- Providing \$250,000 in funding to the Moose Hide Campaign, an Indigenous-led grassroots movement to engage men and boys in their key roles in ending violence towards women and children.

- Providing over \$77,000 to Ka Ni Kanichihk, an Indigenous-led local non-profit, from the sale of more than 2,500 specialty license plates in support of MMIWG2S+ (Figure 9). These funds will primarily support education costs for students from MMIWG2S+ families.



Figure 9 - MMIWG2S+ License Plates

- Engaging with inter-agency partners to support the establishment of a Red Dress Alert system, which will provide notification when an Indigenous woman, girl, two-spirit or gender-diverse person goes missing. While there is interest in replicating this alert system across Canada, Manitoba is taking the lead in rolling out this work to urgently increase safety for Manitobans.
- [Expanding the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program](#) and creating a provincial sexual assault nurse examiner strategy to improve access to care in rural and northern communities. Statistically, Indigenous individuals experience more sexual assaults and are also less likely to report victimization, in part because social systems do not have sufficient supports in place to ensure safe reporting. During the reporting period for this annual progress report, Manitoba expanded the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program to communities within the Northern Health and Prairie Mountain Health Regions, where Indigenous population demographics were the highest. Previously, there had been no similar services to survivors in rural, northern and remote communities. Capacity for this program was increased through the hiring of additional full-time forensic nurse positions and designating two part-time positions for Indigenous persons.

## Addressing Indigenous Over Representation in the Justice System

In the 2023/24 fiscal year, the comparative likelihood of being incarcerated for Indigenous Manitobans was 14 times higher than for non-Indigenous Manitobans. There is much research that concludes these numbers reflect systemic racism and other inequities as well as the over-policing of Black, Indigenous and Peoples of Colour, reflecting the need for a coordinated, multi-faceted response. Manitoba is committed to responding to the disproportionate representation of Indigenous Manitobans in the justice system. Manitoba remains committed to reducing Indigenous incarceration rates. Initiatives in this area include:



- Funding and continuing to support 15 community mobilization programs across the province providing service to Indigenous families. These programs aim to reduce the number of Manitobans victimized by crime or becoming criminal offenders through team-based planning and interventions that promote collaboration and communication between team members, youth, family and community supports. In 2023/24, 93% of participants saw improved outcomes (i.e., reductions in charges, calls for police services, and involvement with criminal justice system), compared to 71% in 2022/23. Manitoba has been active in building reconciliation knowledge and supports into the programs through the implementation of a TRC sub-committee, bringing together service delivery partners to support community mobilization efforts.
- Partnering with Manitoba Keewatinowí Okimakanak (MKO) to use virtual technology to return provincial court services to Shamattawa First Nation. The department is working with MKO to identify and implement virtual justice services in more MKO-represented northern communities. Virtual hearings improve access to court proceedings by making it easier and less expensive to attend court hearings, especially for Manitobans who live in First Nations and remote communities. These individuals save on time and expenses if they can access court proceedings in their own communities, resulting in a potential reduction in missed court appearances. Additionally, there is a significant social and fiscal benefit to the provincial system when delays are reduced, access is increased, and systems respond to the need at the local level.
- Providing funding to New Directions to deliver the Honouring Our Journey Programs, formerly known as the Transition Education Resources for Females which is a structured transition, healing and education program for children, youth, adults and transgender individuals who have been exploited/trafficked through the sex trade. The program helps individuals maintain/retain housing, connects participants to supportive services and promotes healthy lifestyles.

### **Addressing Chronic Homelessness and Improving Access to Housing**

Manitoba has been making significant progress on its commitment to end chronic homelessness by bringing organizations, governments and Indigenous nations together to move people from tents to housing. In addition to this, Manitoba is committed to working to make housing more affordable by increasing the housing supply, including new social housing initiatives delivered in partnership with non-profit community housing providers. Examples include:

- Establishing a collaborative action circle, including representatives from Indigenous organizations, to support a [\\$5.7 million phased approach to support Manitobans experiencing homelessness](#) or at risk of becoming homeless over the winter months, with a focus on Indigenous women, youth and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals.
 

Total number of new social and affordable housing units funded annually	
2021/22 Actual	345
2022/23 Actual	185
2023/24 Target	373
2023/24 Actual	496

  - Phase 1: the government provided \$2.6 million to shelters across Manitoba to allow them to operate during daytime hours, ensuring people experiencing homelessness had safe, warm places to shelter from extreme winter weather.
  - Phase 2: the government provided \$3.16 million to support a range of initiatives, including interim housing at hotels, new transitional and supportive housing, safe transportation for women and focused outreach to Indigenous women.
- Supporting End Homelessness Winnipeg, an Indigenous-led organization, by providing \$250,000 annually in core funding for coordinating the homelessness response in Winnipeg.
- Aiding a variety of housing development projects focused on housing Indigenous peoples.
  - 324 units were funded across seven projects, totaling \$19.5 million in funding provided. Of these units, 82 are allocated to focus on people exiting homelessness, and 110 units are rent-geared-to-income.
  - These commitments were made under the negotiated request for proposals for the development of social housing units and reprofiled funding to other aligned projects from the National Housing Strategy and provincial funding.
- Funding other housing projects that include Indigenous people as one of multiple target tenant groups, including *Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn* (The Hudson Bay Company building redevelopment project, led by Southern Chiefs Organization, Inc.).

## Mental Health and Addictions Supports

Mental Health and Addiction supports are important aspects of health care in Manitoba. By providing strategic direction and funding to mental health and addictions programs, the Manitoba government can provide Manitobans the support they need to lead healthy, fulfilling lives while decolonizing treatment options to better serve Indigenous clients. Initiatives in this area include:

- Continuing to operate the Manitoba Take Home Naloxone Program which is available to all members of the public who are at risk of opioid overdose, and family or friends who

may witness overdoses. This program aligns with and is in response to *Call to Action 20* to eliminate any inequalities to service based on jurisdictional issues.

- Announcing \$527,000 for the Manitoba HIV Program to develop infrastructure to launch a new outreach and intensive case management program for people living with HIV who are not connected to care, called the Program to Access Treatment for HIV and Support.
- Bringing [the Aboriginal Health and Community Rapid Access to Addiction Medication Clinic](#) online with \$1 million in annual funding. The clinic acts as a central hub, providing in-person services to urban Indigenous people, and virtual care for rural Indigenous Manitobans. The clinic offers low-barrier substance use and addictions support as well as opioid agonist therapy.
  - This has already had a positive impact on clinic pressures in Winnipeg, with 220 initial assessments and 110 follow-up appointments completed in the reporting period, reducing the percent of patient redirects in Winnipeg Rapid Access to Addiction Medication Clinics from 65% in October 2023, to 32% in March 2024.

## **Indigenous Health Supports**

The TRC *Calls to Action* 18 through 24 address health care for Indigenous peoples in Canada. These calls seek to address the inequality in health and gaps in health care that Indigenous peoples experience due to the history of residential schools and government policies. Manitoba supported multiple initiatives to address health care gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitobans, including:

- Establishing the Provincial Indigenous Health Network in Shared Health Manitoba, with most of the members of this table being Indigenous leaders in the health system. This network's goal is to improve access, outcomes and experiences for Indigenous peoples seeking and receiving health services across Manitoba.
- Shared Health co-led and participated in the implementation of a co-leadership planning model with the northern collaborative working team.
- Cancer Care Manitoba co-hosted two northern engagement sessions in collaboration with northern partners such as Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc., Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, Northern Regional Health Authority, Cree Nation Health, Norway House Cree Nation, Indigenous Services Canada and Ongomiizwin Health Services to identify action items to move forward the priorities for cancer control in Manitoba.
- The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority kicked off a cross-departmental project team to co-develop an actionable, rights holder-informed Indigenous Health Strategy and will consult Indigenous-led partner organizations in the spirit of co-development,

create an Indigenous-led Advisory Committee to prioritize areas of focus for the organization over the next three to five years, aligned with TRC, UNDRIP and the MMWIG inquiry.

## Co-Developing Manitoba's Health Strategy

The Manitoba government is working collaboratively with Indigenous communities and organizations across the province to engage and co-develop health services that would support Indigenous peoples in Manitoba. Indigenous voices are being included in decision making and strategic planning in real and tangible ways that include:

- Establishing a new Northern My Health Team in partnership with Opaskwayak Health Authority and the Northern Health Region where teams of care providers work together to plan and deliver services (*Figure 10*). This initiative includes a nurse and a social worker, specializing in mental health and addictions medicine, to support and expand mental health and addictions services in the Opaskwayak Cree Nation Beatrice Wilson Health Centre, with a satellite location in The Pas.



Figure 10 - My Health Team Informational Graphic

- Supporting a new Aboriginal Health and Community Wellness Mobile Care Program, which is an Indigenous-led model that provides primary care, as well as other wraparound supports directly to people who are unhoused or precariously housed.
- [Providing \\$271K to Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre](#) for offering an Indigenous-led mobile health care service to improve access to HIV treatment and prevent additional transmissions.
- Supporting Southern Chiefs' Organization to [bring lab services to citizens of Lake Manitoba First Nation](#). This includes partnering with Red River College Polytechnic and Southern Chief Organization's Health Transformation team to provide training to staff to deliver lab services.

## Improving Education Outcomes for Indigenous Youth

The Indigenous population in Manitoba is significantly younger than the non-Indigenous population, with children aged 14 and under making up over 30% Indigenous individuals in Manitoba as of the 2021 Census. The significant proportion of school-aged Indigenous Manitobans reflects the need for an Indigenous-inclusive education system that fosters a

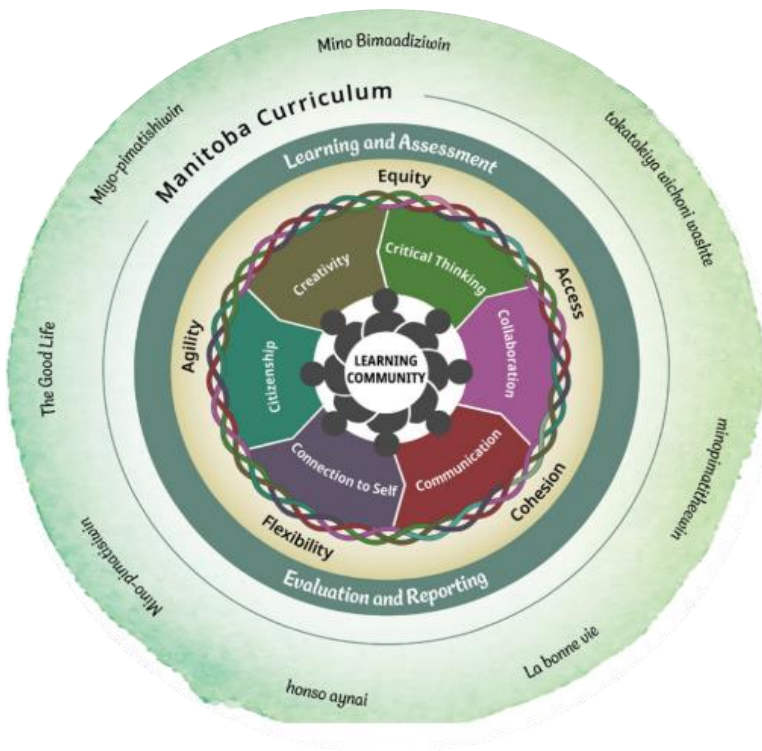


Figure 11 - Framework for Learning including Guiding Principles

sense of belonging for all learners and sets Indigenous youth up for success in school and beyond. Initiatives to improve education outcomes for Indigenous youth include:

- Developing a new [Framework for Learning](#), the blueprint on which essential elements of learning and teaching in Manitoba will now be organized (Figure 11).
- The framework includes Guiding Principles for the Design of Learning Experiences and Assessment Practices. One of these six Guiding Principles is “Learning experiences and

assessment practices support learner growth and well-being by engaging in Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing to strengthen the path toward Truth and Reconciliation.” Building respectful relationships to honour and strengthen the path toward truth and reconciliation provides opportunities for learners to engage deeply.

- Supporting the inaugural [Mamàhtawisiwin symposium](#) in November 2023, to provide Manitoba educators with opportunities to learn and share experiences incorporating Indigenous languages, and worldviews into their teaching practices as part of Manitoba’s Indigenous education policy framework, [entitled Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With](#). The symposium also created space for youth to share their perspectives.

## Youth Wellness, Safety, and Mentorship

The Manitoba government has led or supported various initiatives that enhance the wellness, safety, and overall well-being of Indigenous children and youth. Highlights in this area include:

- Increasing funding by more than 10% for Huddle Manitoba Integrated Youth Service (“Huddle”) from \$1.925 million to \$2.135 million. Huddle offers six youth hubs, two of which are led by Indigenous organizations with the others having strong partnerships with Indigenous organizations. Huddle aims to expand services to rural and

underserved regions in Manitoba, continue building service pathways and partnerships, improving access to youth services, including mental health support, substance use and addictions services, primary care, peer support and other social services.

- Creating a Safe Sleep Committee in response to the recommendations in the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth's *Safe and Sound: A Special Support on the Unexpected Sleep Related Deaths of 145 Manitoba Infants*. Indigenous infants are disproportionately represented and part of the report's recommendations were to collaborate with Indigenous organizations.
  - Representatives, including the First Nation Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba, Manitoba Education, and Manitoba Early Childhood Learning developed communications and infant safe sleep resources, including a core competencies course for community settings accessible through the employee learning management system database in conjunction with the Department of Families.
  - Information on safe sleep surfaces include traditional sleep practices, such as baby boards (cradleboards) and moss bags.

### **Returning Jurisdiction for Child and Family Services**

In recent years, over 90% of Manitoba children in the jurisdiction of child and family services (CFS) care are Indigenous. Manitoba is taking action to address this and collaborating with Indigenous governments through discussion and relationship building as they exercise jurisdiction in relation to CFS through enacting Indigenous nation law. Progress made during the reporting period includes:

- Providing Peguis First Nation with \$10.81 million for the delivery of CFS under Peguis First Nation's Honouring Our Children, Families and Nation Act. The departments of Health and Families amended several provincial policies and legislation to align with federal policy and legislated changes aimed at returning governance of child welfare to Indigenous governing bodies.
- Participated in two active coordination agreement tables and held 25 meetings with Indigenous nations for the purpose of entering into coordination agreements to transfer responsibility of CFS to Indigenous governments and ensure ongoing systematic coordination between provincial services and child protection services delivered under Indigenous laws.
- Hosting the Child and Family Services Leadership Council, which provides a forum with leaders from First Nations and Métis Regional Indigenous Organizations (Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Métis Federation, Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc., Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak) for discussions regarding CFS issues.



- Establishing a technician table with representatives from the Regional Indigenous Organizations. The technician table informs proposed legislative amendments in response to emergent Indigenous CFS laws, shapes agendas for Leadership Council meetings, and advises on other matters related to the delivery of provincial CFS. Feedback and input from this table directly informed the content of Bill 38, An Act Respecting Child and Family Services (Indigenous Jurisdiction And Other Amendments), introduced in the Spring 2024 legislative session.
- Through Archives of Manitoba, continuing to provide policy and procedural support to Manitoba Families and Indigenous governing bodies regarding the management of child welfare records as Indigenous governing bodies assume control of child welfare in their communities.

The pursuit of the good life requires parents, caregivers and relations to help children and youth grow into healthy adults by providing them with the knowledge, skills and connection to culture that will ensure they can find their own unique approach to living the good life. The Manitoba government will continue to build on early achievements described above to put reconciliation into meaningful action, ensuring that all Manitobans can achieve health, safety, and happiness.

## Looking Forward

The initiatives highlighted here are laying the foundation for what is planned. The change in provincial government in late 2023, also brought with it a wholesale change in the approach to and work of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. A whole-of-government approach is needed to ensure reconciliation is meaningful and lasting. Each provincial department must consider, plan for, and incorporate a reconciliation lens with its work because each area of the government has a role to play in advancing truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Manitobans and on behalf of all citizens of the province.

While this report begins to demonstrate the accomplishments already being made, there is much left to do. Early success serves as the foundation for what is ahead, additional plans are underway to grow these achievements on the path to strengthened Indigenous nationhood through reconciliation. Overall, Manitoba is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous Manitobans and in a government-to-government way to ensure all peoples can live *the good life*, or *mino-pimatisiwin*.



Available in alternate formats upon request



# Appendix A: 2022-23 Path to Reconciliation Act Annual Progress Report

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## Acronyms

Full Text	Acronym
<b>Calls for Justice</b>	CFJ
<b>Calls to Action</b>	CTA
<b>Child and Family Services</b>	CFS
<b>Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder</b>	FASD
<b>Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.</b>	MKO
<b>Manitoba Métis Federation</b>	MMF
<b>Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People</b>	MMIWG2S+
<b>Royal Canadian Mounted Police</b>	RCMP
<b>Southern Chiefs' Organization</b>	SCO
<b>Truth and Reconciliation Commission</b>	TRC
<b>Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities, who use additional terminologies</b>	2SLGBTQQIA+
<b>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</b>	UNDRIP
<b>University College of the North</b>	UCN

# Executive Summary: The Path to Reconciliation in Manitoba

*The Path to Reconciliation Act* recognizes that Manitoba is situated on the traditional lands and territories of Indigenous peoples. The Act also recognizes that Manitoba has benefited, and continues to benefit, from the historical relationships and treaties with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous nations. The Manitoba Government further recognizes that Indigenous peoples in Canada have been subject to a wide variety of systemic and ongoing abuses that have caused great harm since European contact. Through legislation, it is recognized that reconciliation is founded on respect for Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples, their history, languages and cultures, and that reconciliation is necessary to address colonization.

While Manitoba is engaged in numerous ongoing initiatives toward reconciliation, this report focuses on initiatives primarily undertaken by the Manitoba Government between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023. Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat has summarized these actions in this, the eighth Path to Reconciliation Annual Progress Report.

The *Calls to Action: Legacies* section outlines the Manitoba Government's efforts to address the disparities that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Manitoba's social, political and economic systems and institutions, in the spirit of the first 42 Calls to Action (CTA) of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report. These efforts were in collaboration with many different service providers and organizations to try address gaps in the areas of child welfare, education, health, justice, language and culture.

The *Calls to Action: Reconciliation* section highlights work to establish and maintain mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and to create a more equitable and inclusive society.

A third category of *Other Reconciliatory Activities* is included and lists a number of initiatives that further reconciliation beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's CTA. Following this category is a section including measures, initiatives and activities taken to address violence against Indigenous women and girls and provide information on Manitoba's response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and its Calls for Justice (CFJ).

The final section of this report looks forward and addresses how the Manitoba Government will continue to build on the progress it has made towards advancing truth and reconciliation in the province.

## Background

On June 2, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released its report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, which included 94 Calls to Action (CTA) directed at governments, churches, organizations and all Canadians. The TRC released its final report on December 15, 2015.

In March 2016, the Manitoba Government passed *The Path to Reconciliation Act*, with unanimous support in the Manitoba Legislature. The Act set out the government's commitment to advancing reconciliation, guided by the TRC's CTA and the principles in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). In June 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its final report and 231 Calls for Justice (CFJ). *The Path to Reconciliation Act* was amended in 2022, to include the CFJ as a guiding document for Manitoba's reconciliation efforts.

Reconciliation involves an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples; to build trust, affirm historical agreements, address healing, and create a more equitable and inclusive society. Guiding efforts towards reconciliation are the principles of respect, engagement, understanding and action as follows:

**Respect:** Reconciliation is founded on respect for Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples. Respect is based on awareness and acknowledgement of the history of Indigenous peoples and appreciation of Indigenous languages, cultures, practices and legal traditions.

**Engagement:** Reconciliation is founded on engagement with Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples.

**Understanding:** Reconciliation is fostered by striving for a deeper understanding of the historical and current relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and the hopes and aspirations of Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples.

**Action:** Reconciliation is furthered by concrete and constructive action that improves the present and future relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Manitoba's commitment to reconciliation has a particular focus on addressing the persistent and long-standing negative impacts of residential schools and colonization, and to reconciling relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Manitoba. The work of the TRC and the MMIWG National Inquiry, and the courage of Survivors who shared their experiences serve as important catalysts for change.

*The Path to Reconciliation Act* establishes a transparent mechanism to monitor and evaluate the actions taken by the Manitoba Government to advance reconciliation, including measures taken to engage Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples in the reconciliation process.

## A Note on Terminology

In the context of this report, ‘Indigenous nations’ and ‘Indigenous peoples’ are inclusive terms for the original nations and peoples of North America and their descendants, which include: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. The term, ‘Indigenous’ has come to replace ‘Aboriginal’ in recent years, but some pre-existing programs still use the term ‘Aboriginal’ in their naming conventions. The term ‘Aboriginal’ is still used in legal contexts, referring to people with specific legal rights under s.35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The reference to ‘Indigenous nations’ and ‘Indigenous peoples’ is an inclusive term, but many recognize and acknowledge the unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs of the distinct nations and peoples.

The *Constitution Act, 1982* recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indians (more commonly referred to as First Nations), Métis and Inuit.

**First Nation(s):** Status and non-Status Indigenous peoples in Canada identified by different cultural, national or linguistic groups. For example, First Nations linguistic groups in Manitoba include Ininímwín, Anishinaabemowin, Dakota, Anisínemowin, and Dene. The term First Nation came into common usage in the 1970’s to replace the term ‘Indian,’ which many find offensive due to its incorrect origin, and connections to discriminatory and colonial policies under the *Indian Act*. “Status” refers to First Nations people who are registered on the Indian Register pursuant to the *Indian Act*. “Non-Status” refers to people who are descended from and identify as First Nations (or “Indian”) but are not entitled to registration on the Indian Register pursuant to the *Indian Act*. Some Non-Status people may, however, be members of a First Nation band.

**Métis:** A person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. This definition was adopted by the Métis Nation in 2002. In 2003, the Supreme Court Decision in *R. v. Powley* referenced this definition and affirmed that the term Métis does not refer to all individuals of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry. Michif is the term used to describe a collection of languages that emerged as a part of the ethnogenesis of the Métis peoples.

**Inuit:** Indigenous people of the Canadian Arctic, or Inuit Nunangat (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador). The word Inuit means ‘the people’ and the word Inuk is the singular term for Inuit. Inuktitut is the Inuit language as it is spoken in Nunavut.

# Introduction

The eighth *Path to Reconciliation Act Annual Progress Report* follows the themes presented in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Progress towards reconciliation is presented according to the TRC's 94 Calls to Action that seek to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of reconciliation in Canada, and the CFJ of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). This report includes a summary of new actions taken by the Manitoba Government in place between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. This report is composed of five sections:

## 2022/23 Initiatives

- 1) Calls to Action #1-42: Legacies
- 2) Calls to Action #43-94: Reconciliation
- 3) Addressing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- 4) Other Reconciliatory Actions
- 5) Looking Forward

Each section in this report summarizes the new actions taken in 2022/23 to address the Calls to Action outlined by the TRC, the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into MMIWG, or other reconciliatory actions.



## **Calls to Action: Legacies - New Initiatives**

This section focuses on addressing the legacy of impacts from residential schools on Indigenous peoples and the resulting disparities that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Manitoba's social, political, and economic systems and institutions.

### **Child Welfare**

#### ***TRC Calls to Action:* #1-5**

In Manitoba, a disproportionate number of children in the care of Child and Family Services (CFS) are Indigenous. These numbers correspond with the circumstances in which many Indigenous families are living and are associated with the legacy of colonization, residential schools, and loss of cultural identity. These Calls to Action require governments to:

- reduce the number of Indigenous children in care;
- report on the number of Indigenous children in care and total spending on preventative services;
- implement Jordan's Principle; and
- provide culturally relevant care and enact legislation affirming the right of Indigenous governments to maintain their own child welfare agencies.

#### **Progress:**

##### Actions to reduce the number of Indigenous children in care include:

- Provided \$229K multi-year core funding starting in 2022/23 to the Honouring Gifts program, through Ka Ni Kanichihk. This program provides employment-related supports to Indigenous single mothers. Participants are offered skills training, cultural supports, life planning and career development activities aimed at ending economic dependence on government and non-government social systems.

##### Prevention and culturally relevant activities:

- Child and Family Service Authorities were provided funding to develop culturally competent foster parent training. Foster parent training occurs at the agency level as well as offerings through the Kinship and Foster Family Network of Manitoba.

- In 2022/23, Manitoba met with Indigenous nations that expressed interest in exercising jurisdiction over child welfare to learn about their plans and ideas and to share helpful information. Manitoba signed a trilateral coordination agreement with Peguis First Nation which recognizes their inherent jurisdiction over child welfare. Manitoba created the Indigenous Jurisdiction Transition Office (formerly Indigenous Governing Bodies Support Branch) to work with Indigenous nations on the path to exercising jurisdiction. Recognizing the importance of self-governance, Manitoba began coordination with the Southern First Nations Network of Care to mandate Dakota Tiwahe Services Inc., a new Child and Family Service (CFS) agency serving Sioux Valley Dakota Nation.

#### Reporting on the number of children in care:

- The Department of Families reports annually on the number of children in care. The number of children in care decreased by 206 over 2022/23, a reduction of 2.2 per cent. Indigenous children represent 91 per cent of children in care.

#### Jordan's Principle:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives to build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

#### Child welfare legislation:

- Held meetings with Indigenous nations that expressed interest in exercising jurisdiction over child welfare to learn about their plans and ideas and to share helpful information.
- Engaged with Indigenous leadership and representatives to inform amendments to the Child and Family Services Act. The Child and Youth Services Division engaged with CFS Authorities on pressures for system funding and how to support the implementation of the National Standards.
- Incorporated elements of the Federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families into the Provincial Child and Family Services Act, including a placement priority scheme which emphasizes proximity to culture and family.
- Added the concept of an alternate decision maker (a person authorized to make decisions about a child without being the child's parent or guardian) to provincial legislation and worked with other intersecting areas of government to adopt this practice to support communities placing children where they believe to be best suited. An alternate decision maker allows provincial systems, such as health and education, to better support Indigenous children and families without relying legal transfers of guardianship.

## **Education**

### ***TRC Calls to Action: #6-12***

Lower rates of educational achievement among First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth can be linked to the legacy of the impacts of colonialism such as experiences of poverty, unstable housing and health, and family violence. The legacy of impacts also affects the educational achievement and employment success of adults, including Survivors and subsequent generations.

Although these CTA are directed at the federal government, the Manitoba Government took some steps to address the legacy of colonialism on the educational success of Indigenous peoples through the delivery of educational supports for youth and adults across Manitoba that are directed toward:

- eliminating educational and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians;
- eliminating and reporting on the discrepancy in funding between First Nations children educated on- and off reserve; and
- developing culturally appropriate curricula, protecting languages and creating culturally appropriate early education programs.

### **Progress:**

#### Eliminating education and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians:

- Provided over \$675K in funding to support the Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP). OYEP is a national network of education, training and work opportunities for Indigenous youth. This delivery includes a land-based summer program and comprehensive wrap around services including job readiness, employment, training, education, mentorship and mental wellness modules that support professional and personal resilience and development. This project is offered to 22 youth and works to eliminate the educational and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitobans.
- Partnered with the Manitoba Construction Sector Council and the Clan Mothers Healing Village to deliver a 37-week carpentry program for 20 Indigenous women. The

program offered culturally informed training for Indigenous women in northern and remote communities. Training included home framing, blast hole drilling, and water and waste systems, including basic plumbing and piping knowledge, useful in residential plumbing maintenance and installation. This program will continue in 2023/2024.

- Hired an Indigenous Strategic Initiative Consultant, who is responsible for supporting and implementing corporate programs and services that align with policy and advance the government's overall retention, employee engagement and diversity, inclusion, and accessibility objectives. The position is also responsible for supporting and implementing various projects related to advancing reconciliation across the Manitoba Public Service.
- The Public Service Commission received \$130K in 2022/23 (a total of \$519K from 2022/23 to 2024/25) for three term positions to develop and lead a strategic Indigenous public service workforce plan that advances truth and reconciliation, coordinates efforts across departments and responds to overall diversity and inclusion efforts within Manitoba's public service. These efforts respond to recent recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General in their audit of Manitoba's implementation of *The Path to Reconciliation Act*.

Eliminating and reporting on the discrepancy in funding between First Nations children educated on and off reserve:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives to build off past initiatives pertaining to this call.

Improving education attainment levels and success rates:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives to build off past initiatives pertaining to this call.

Developing culturally appropriate curricula, protecting languages, and creating culturally appropriate early education programs:

- In 2022/23, Manitoba invested \$53K towards the purchase of resources, equipment, and training to promote the understanding of Indigenous cultures in five childcare facilities through the Indigenous Programming Grant. Childcare facilities received grants between \$5K to \$20K, depending on the number of licensed infant and preschool spaces offered. This funding is provided through the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Childcare Agreement 2021-25 and complements investments made by

the Government of Canada to strengthen culturally appropriate early learning and child-care programs for Indigenous children and families in Manitoba.

Supporting parents to participate in the education of their children:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives to build off past initiatives pertaining to this call.

**Language and Culture**

***TRC Calls to Action: #13-17***

Colonization and the residential school system have affected the sense of identity for many Survivors and subsequent generations of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Programs to respond to this recognize that connections to language, culture and heritage are essential, especially for youth, to reclaim identity and connection to community and society. These foundational first steps in reclaiming First Nations, Métis and Inuit identity and promoting an understanding of their languages, cultures and heritage, support the journey of reconciliation.

These Calls to Action are directed primarily at the federal government, but Manitoba has taken steps in the spirit of the Calls to Action to support Indigenous languages and culture. Actions within this theme emphasize the preservation and reclamation of Indigenous languages and supporting culture and heritage.

**Progress:**

Supporting the preservation and reclamation of culture and Indigenous languages:

- The Manitoba Government's Vital Statistics Branch took steps to indefinitely waive fees related to legal name changes to help residential school, Federal Indian Day School and '60s Scoop Survivors and their families reclaim their traditional names. The waiving of the fees follows amendments to Manitoba's Vital Statistics Act to expand the parameters of name registration to include a wider range of characters and names in recognition of traditional Indigenous cultures and other cultures and languages. This allows additional characters and provides an option of single names in accordance with cultural practices.
- Through the newly established Arts, Culture and Sport in Community Fund, Manitoba supported community organizations and Indigenous governments in offering programs to meet the cultural and linguistic rights and needs of Indigenous peoples. Initiatives include:

- \$1.4 million funding: Ka Ni Kanichihk Cultural Wellness Centre;
  - \$4.2 million funding: Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Indigenous Culture, Food and Language Community Hub; and
  - \$562K funding: Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation Indigenous Focused Cultural Arts Theatre Project.
- Provided funding to Manitoba Indigenous Cultural Education Centre Inc (MICEC) for the “Understanding the Heritage Collection” initiative – an exhibit of the history of Collections at MICEC, including launch event and reception. The exhibit includes 10-20 curated objects from the collection which tell a story of the history of collections at MICEC, and the importance of collections in telling their story as an Indigenous cultural centre and museum. The exhibit has a multimedia experience of a video which will include historical and modern recordings including interviews with MICEC staff and stakeholders. A printed brochure provides additional background material and research on the objects.
  - Provided funding to Opaskwayak Cree Nation for the Cemetery and Grave Research initiative. Funding was used to research the history of cemeteries located within Opaskwayak Cree Nation, determine who is buried there, and whether they died in the tuberculosis epidemic.

## **Health**

### ***TRC Calls to Action: #18-24***

This section calls on all levels of government to acknowledge how the legacy of colonialism and residential schools have led to poor health outcomes for Indigenous peoples. These Calls to Action address:

- closing the gap in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations;
- recognizing and using Indigenous healing practices;
- improving cultural competencies; and
- increasing the number of Indigenous professionals in the health care system.

### **Progress:**

#### Closing the gap in health outcomes:

- Provided funding to the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network (MHRN), a provincial network working towards ensuring harm reduction is universally practiced by

individuals, organizations and systems to address sexually transmitted infections and blood borne infections. MHRN provides northern, rural and remote program support. They coordinate networks made up of Tribal Councils, regional health authorities, community-based organizations, and people who use drugs.

- Shared Health implemented the Virtual Emergency Care and Transfer Resource Service (VECTRS) Program in the Northern Regional Health Authority, a pilot project involving a 24/7 single point of contact call-in centre to access emergency physicians, advanced care paramedics and advanced practice respiratory therapists. The goal of this program is to enable rural emergency departments, health centres, and nursing stations in the north to reach out to experts in emergency medicine in Winnipeg and receive rapid virtual support enabling better service provision to patients onsite without needing to fly them to Winnipeg. The VECTRS Program will subsequently be rolled out to the other health regions, and expanded to other health care providers (e.g., junior paramedics to have access to advanced care paramedics, physicians).
- Prairie Mountain Health has made operational changes to improve outcomes for Indigenous patients upon discharge, including:
  - Updating their discharge planning policies and checklists, including an updated First Nations Discharge Planning Workflow;
  - Creating an updated contact and resource list for First Nations communities in the region to support discharge coordination; and
  - Expanding its definition of “complex discharge” (patients who are being discharged from hospital but will require ongoing specialized care to live at home) to include First Nations communities due to the associated jurisdictional challenges, as well as to include anyone living in rural or remote communities.
- Provided more than \$2.1 million to support Indigenous-led mental health and wellness programming. Through one-time capacity grants, Manitoba provided \$1.069 million each to Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) and Southern Chiefs’ Organization (SCO) to support their mobile crisis response teams. These teams provide mental health crisis response by blending experiential, academic, and traditional knowledge to create a culturally sensitive, genuine approach to stabilizing crisis within First Nation communities.
- The Clinical & Preventive Service Plan (CPSP) Northern Implementation Team has been working to collaboratively plan with Indigenous partners including MKO, Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoyawin Inc., Indigenous Services Canada, and Keewatin Tribal Council,



and Intermediate Services for the North. Phase one includes capital investment for intermediate services and three priorities have been identified: Women's Health, Mental Health and Addiction, and Emergency Medicine and Trauma care. A specific Traditional Medicine Provincial Clinical Teams (PCT) was formed under this process.

- The mental health Indigenous partnership initiatives for 2022/23 included the Ashern/Hodgson Indigenous My Health Team (MyHT) with a focus on providing three new mental health workers that will provide services in First Nations communities. There are 15 MyHTs in the province, funded by the Government of Manitoba and led by a steering committee where the Indigenous communities have the lead voice. In addition, the First Nations Health Team provides access to rural tele-psychiatry, mobile crisis services for both adults and children, and the crisis stabilization unit to Indigenous communities. Offering primary care access in communities through outreach and teen clinics, with a significant mental health addictions service expansion and Shared EMR expansion with Indigenous health teams.

#### Culturally appropriate health care services:

- The Indigenous Partnership Team in Manitoba Health engaged on Indigenous priorities and supported Clinical & Preventive Service Plan (CPSP) implementation teams to address cultural safety by planning and conducting engagements with Indigenous partners/communities. These engagements gathered feedback about CPSP capital facility design elements, such as cultural/spiritual rooms, smudging, interior visuals, and healing gardens.
- Created an Indigenous Traditional Healing Care Coordinator position at Interlake Eastern Regional Health Authority Withdrawal Management Services to ensure culturally appropriate care is provided.
- Held workshops with Indigenous Health representatives and leaders at Service Delivery Organizations to advance the development of the Indigenous Health Operating Model.
- Introduced Elders to support Indigenous patients in hospital at Northern Regional Health Authority.
- Coordinated blessing ceremonies and land acknowledgements led by Elders and Knowledge Keepers for new builds and renovations of hospitals and other health facilities undertaken by regional health authorities across the province.

Culturally appropriate training and increasing the number of Indigenous professionals in the health care system:

- Developed and implemented a Truth and Reconciliation tool to assist projects and teams in the Department of Health in applying an Indigenous lens to their work. Additional tools were created to support the operationalization of the Indigenous Partnership Strategy Framework which address Indigenous engagement, budgets and honoraria, and Indigenous-specific training materials for new staff.

**Justice**

***TRC Calls to Action:* #25-42**

The high incarceration rates of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples can be linked to colonization, the harmful actions experienced by children in residential schools, and intergenerational trauma. The largest proportion of the Calls to Action fall under the justice theme. The Calls to Action directed at provincial governments include:

- eliminating the overrepresentation of Indigenous adults and youth in custody;
- providing culturally relevant services to offenders;
- finding alternatives to imprisonment and recognizing Indigenous justice systems;
- addressing the needs of offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD); and
- adequately funding Indigenous-specific victim services programs.

**Progress:**

Eliminating the overrepresentation of Indigenous adults and youth in custody:

- Partnered with MKO to introduce the Reducing Youth Justice Involvement initiative (Kakiskinawtahitonan – We Will Show You the Way). The initiative will provide culturally appropriate programming for youth in the justice system. The goal of the program will be reducing Indigenous youth involvement in the justice system, and connecting them to their culture, community and identity. This initiative will support a minimum of 45 youth, 30 in Winnipeg and 15 in Thompson, throughout the program's three-year term. The success of the program is measured by the reduction of days in custody for Indigenous youth.
- Expanded the Community Mobilization Initiatives, including extension into Waywayseecappo First Nation. These initiatives provide communities with support to meet their unique needs and challenges, foster autonomy and collaboration at the local level, and support families, youth and adults by connecting them to appropriate resources. The aim is to reduce community members' involvement with the Justice

system. Under this program, there are 14 initiatives across the province providing service to Indigenous participants and families.

- Established a Reconciliation Lead position at Manitoba Prosecution Services to implement the Calls to Action, Calls for Justice and Aboriginal Justice Inquiry recommendations. Key areas of focus are the ongoing education of MPS personnel, relationship building with Indigenous communities and organizations, and restorative justice.
- Engaged in negotiations with the federal government to secure increased funding for self-determined policing for all 63 First Nations in Manitoba. First Nations policing is funded through the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program (FNIPP), which is cost shared with the federal government (52% Federal and 48% Provincial). In 2022/23, 18 First Nations participated in the FNIPP.
- Supported a request from Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN) to transition their policing services from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to Manitoba First Nations Police Service. A transition team was created comprised of Manitoba Justice, Public Safety Canada, Manitoba First Nations Police Service, RCMP, OCN and the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Commission.
- Committed to supporting the development of new self-administered police services for the SCO and MKO. Trilateral agreements to support the development of self-administered police services with each organization and the government of Canada are in the final stages.
- In collaboration with MKO, the Correctional Services Division of Manitoba Justice has committed to the development of open custody, Intoxicated Persons Detention Act (IPDA) beds and transitional housing in Thompson. Additionally, MKO has been contracted to develop a youth community healing lodge that will blend Indigenous-led approaches and teachings with trauma-informed youth programming. These are multi-phased projects intended to provide more justice resources in the north, reduce youth reoffending rates and decrease the use of Thompson's RCMP cells for non-violent youth.

#### Providing culturally relevant services to offenders:

- Provided funding for two five-day Culture Camps on site at the Manitoba Youth Centre. Guided by Elders and Knowledge Keepers, the Camp will provide Indigenous

teachings and skill-building to youth such as sacred fires, preparing feasts, participate in sweat lodge, tipi building, smudging, drum making, singing and storytelling. This program provides youth in custody with the opportunity for healing, personal growth and development, cultural knowledge, supports for connection to self-awareness and traditional ways of life, and enhancement of overall mental well-being.

- Committed \$2.6 million to construct healing lodges in the Brandon Correctional Centre and The Pas Correctional Centre. Healing lodges provide rehabilitative treatments as they incorporate traditional ceremonies, land-based experiences, education, life-skills training, and cognitive behavioural intervention which allow participants to heal and strengthen their mind, spirit, body, and heart. The lodges will include supporting language acquisition, inmate education, sobriety, family reunification and reinforce the connection to community. Those who leave the facility will be given access to relevant, informative community supports to ensure the traditional teachings will continue after release. The healing lodges are designed to provide therapeutic and rehabilitative approaches for Indigenous individuals in custody.
- Worked to ensure cultural resources are available to Indigenous offenders, including:
  - Constructing a tipi in each correctional centre, accessible to incarcerated individuals;
  - Constructing a sweat lodge at the Manitoba Youth Centre for youth to utilize with the guidance of the centre's Indigenous Spiritual Care Giver; and
  - Ensuring medicine bundles are available at each Probation Office. Each bundle includes a blanket, talking stick, dish for smudging, sage and a blessing bundle. Access to these bundles is available at the request of clients during their appointments.
- Received approval to utilize Intensive Rehabilitative Custody and Supervision funding received from Justice Canada to contract Indigenous Cultural Support Services for eligible youth, both in custody and the community. With these additional resources available, youth can receive Indigenous supports to aid in their rehabilitation and reintegration in the community.

Finding alternatives to imprisonment and recognizing Indigenous justice systems:

- The Better Outcomes for Female Offenders initiative is an interdepartmental working group that seeks to reduce rates of incarceration and reoffending amongst women and

girls in the justice system. Research indicates that a majority of offenders have experienced poverty resulting from low educational attainment and under-employment. They are also more likely to live with a disability, experience mental health/health issues, have problematic substance use, and be a member of a racialized group. This initiative is a long-term effort to address these intersectional and complex contributing factors such as intergenerational trauma among Indigenous people because of colonial systems.

- Manitoba Prosecution Services (MPS) has been involved in discussions about the use of Sentencing Circles and Justice Circles as alternatives to the conventional criminal justice system.
- MPS has been involved with MKO in their development of a process for the enforcement of First Nations by-laws, which would also include the resolving infractions through a restorative justice approach. MPS reported an increase in restorative justice referrals for 2022/23.

Work to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and better respond to the needs of offenders with FASD:

- Brought together Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) program service providers and Indigenous leaders from across the province to share knowledge and exchange ideas on how to prevent FASD and increase support to children and families affected by FASD in a more culturally relevant manner.

Adequately funding accessible Indigenous-specific victim services programs:

- Contributed funding to the newly opened TOBA Centre for Children and Youth, a child advocacy centre. Within this centre, police, social work, medical and other support services work together to serve children and families in response to child abuse in Manitoba. The coordinated response framework serves to reduce potential trauma to youth and families by providing forensic interviews and wrap around supports in a safe and neutral setting.

Appointment of a public inquiry into the causes of, and remedies for, the disproportionate victimization of Indigenous women and girls.

- Please refer to the Addressing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls section of this report for information on how Manitoba is responding to the issue of MMIWG.

## **Calls to Action: Reconciliation - New Initiatives**

Efforts towards reconciliation are long-term and continually evolving. Manitoba, in partnership with many other organizations, has taken action towards reconciliation under many of the TRC's Calls to Action themes that include:

- Canadian Governments and UNDRIP;
- Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation;
- Settlement Agreement Parties and UNDRIP;
- Equity for Indigenous people in the legal system;
- National Council for Reconciliation;
- Professional development and training for public servants;
- Church apologies and reconciliation;
- Education for reconciliation;
- Youth programs;
- Museums and archives;
- Missing Children and Burial information;
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation;
- Commemoration;
- Media and Reconciliation;
- Sports and Reconciliation;
- Business and Reconciliation; and
- Newcomers to Canada.

### **Canadian Governments and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

#### ***TRC Calls to Action: #43-44***

Manitoba has a duty to consult in a meaningful way with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities when a government decision or action could infringe upon or adversely affect their ability to exercise their Aboriginal or treaty rights. In addition to constitutional obligations, Manitoba recognizes the importance of Indigenous peoples' relationships to land and provides support for cooperative natural resources management.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) refers to a broad spectrum of rights, many of which fall under previous themes, such as Child Welfare, Education and Health. To avoid duplication in reporting, the following actions are

in response to the UNDRIP articles referring to Aboriginal and treaty rights, land and resource rights, and self-determination.

## **Progress:**

### Aboriginal and Treaty Rights:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives to build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

### Land and resource rights and self-determination:

- Increased Indigenous participation and inclusion in the Manitoba Protein Strategy, and Indigenous-focused sessions at the Sustainable Animal Protein Summit in December 2022.
- Signed Memorandums of Understanding with several First Nations to develop two-year revenue sharing pilot projects to return 45 per cent of timber revenues due to Indigenous communities. Further, to create an economic development assessment for future forest industry use, Manitoba issued an option licence to a First Nation consortium consisting of four First Nations with respect to the potential for an Indigenous-led commercial forest development in eastern Manitoba.
- Environment and Climate Change began to co-develop a new approach to engaging with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples prior to launching initiatives and changing programs. The co-development framework will help manage common interests like wildlife and fisheries, resource developments and parks.
- Environment and Climate Change began a collaborative partnership between Indigenous communities and governments to execute an Indigenous engagement process for Manitoba's whole-of-government Water Management Strategy.

## **Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation**

### ***TRC Calls to Action:* #45-47**

These Calls to Action are directed towards Canada and the parties involved in the residential school system, to recommend a Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify the principles for advancing reconciliation. In response to the TRC's Final Report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, Manitoba proclaimed *The Path to Reconciliation Act* to guide provincial action towards reconciliation.



In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives building on past efforts pertaining to these calls.

### **Settlement Agreement Parties and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

***TRC Calls to Action:*** #48-49

These Calls to Action are directed to church and settlement agreement parties and to religious denominations and asks them to comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### **Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System**

***TRC Calls to Action:*** #50-52

These Calls to Action are directed primarily to the federal government. They refer to establishing funding to support Indigenous law institutes and publishing legal opinions concerning the scope and extent of Aboriginal and treaty rights. The federal and provincial governments are also called upon to adopt legal principles pertaining to Aboriginal title claims.

The Manitoba Government notes that the legal principles that apply to the determination of Aboriginal title have been set by the Supreme Court of Canada through several cases including Delgamuukw, Marshall, Bernard and Tsilhqot'in.

### **National Council for Reconciliation**

***TRC Calls to Action:*** #53-56

These Calls to Action are directed primarily to the federal government and Parliament to establish and fund a National Council for Reconciliation to monitor, evaluate and annually report to Parliament on the progress of reconciliation and develop a multi-year national reconciliation plan. Call to Action #55 calls upon all levels of government to report on progress towards reconciliation.

In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to these calls.

## **Professional Development and Training for Public Servants**

### ***TRC Call to Action: #57***

This calls upon all levels of government to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), treaty and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Indigenous-Crown relations.

Manitoba offers many corporate education and training opportunities, but individual departments and branches have also undertaken initiatives to train their staff to increase cultural awareness and understanding. The decolonization of service and program delivery is also taking place through the promotion of inclusive, respectful and mindful policies and processes.

### **Progress:**

#### Education and training for public servants:

- Worked closely with Indigenous service providers to develop and facilitate Indigenous learning events available to all public servants. These workshops cover many topics related to truth and reconciliation, including: the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada, the direct and intergenerational effects of colonization and residential schools on Indigenous peoples, effective and respectful communication practices with Indigenous peoples in Manitoba, and understanding stereotypes and ongoing colonialism.
- Worked in collaboration with Clear Directions, an Indigenous service provider, throughout the reporting year to develop new mandatory training for all public servants. The Public Service Commission (PSC), in collaboration with the Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat developed Our Shared Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation, the first of four modules, for launch in July 2023. Additional guidance is offered to support public servants as they navigate their course learnings including resources for managers in supporting their teams through the training, Indigenous healing supports, and debriefing sessions with Clear Direction. Dedicated sessions are available to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees seeking support.
- Delivered eight sessions of a mandatory five-day immersive cultural awareness sessions to Manitoba Prosecution Services (MPS) personnel. Eight-five Crown Attorneys and 8 file managers have completed the training. Topics covered include pre-contact Indigenous

nations, the impact of colonization on Indigenous nations/families, the residential school system and 60s Scoop, the Métis experience in Manitoba, and Two-Spirit teachings and experiences. The week concludes with land-based teachings, including a sweat lodge ceremony for those wanting to participate. The sessions take place four times a year with the goal of having all Crown Attorneys enrolled by the end of 2024. There are additional “alumni” land-based days to continue the education and wellness that the sessions bring.

- Maintained the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) at Manitoba Prosecutions Service (MPS). Comprised of Indigenous Crown Attorneys and Administrative Staff, IAC provides culturally appropriate advice and practical considerations to all MPS personnel, including in-house continuing professional development on topics including Gladue principles and the victimization of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+. IAC members have participated in selection boards, case conferences, and education sessions. Each MPS working group has an IAC representative or a process in place for IAC consultation.

### **Church Apologies and Reconciliation**

***TRC Calls to Action:*** #58-61

These Calls to Action request apologies and education strategies for church congregations, clergy, religious organizations and other parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

### **Education for Reconciliation**

***TRC Calls to Action:*** #62-65

Non-Indigenous people must have an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories, cultures and heritage to foster reconciliation. Manitoba recognizes the importance of building this understanding by supporting educational and training initiatives incorporating Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, history, culture and traditions, and establishing educational programs and resources. These Calls to Action strive to increase every student’s knowledge and awareness of the legacy of residential schools, treaties and Indigenous history through inclusion in Kindergarten to Grade 12 and post-secondary curricula.

## Progress:

### Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curricula:

- Launched the K-12 Education Action Plan, which focuses on creating a system where all Manitoba students succeed no matter their circumstances, their background, or where they live. The Action Plan's guiding principles include Advancing Truth and Reconciliation, Achieving Equity, and Ensuring Inclusion.
- In partnership with the Indigenous Inclusion Directorate Advisory Council, developed *Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We are Born With* – an Indigenous Education Policy Framework that is an important element of the Action Plan. Over 100 people from across the province – including Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and grandparents – participated in the development of the framework, which aims to empower Manitoba teachers to embed strategies and practices into their educational settings and classroom routines that reflect Indigenous languages, cultures, and identities. Ultimately, the core goal is to enhance the educational achievement and well-being of Indigenous students through cultural inclusion and pride, setting them up for success in school and beyond. The Framework's seven guiding principles provide the foundation for the provincial Indigenous Education Policy Framework that guides actions at all levels in the K-12 education system.
- Partnered with the Manitoba Rural Learning Consortium to facilitate the orientation to *Mamàhtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With*. In the seven sessions that were held, participants gained an understanding of the Policy Framework and their roles and responsibilities regarding its implementation.
- Relaunched a Treaty Education Steering Committee in July 2022, where Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning work in partnership with the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba – as well as leaders in Indigenous communities and the education sector – to develop and implement a treaty education program for all teachers, school staff and students.
- Through the Teachers' Idea Fund, funded numerous projects across the province that aimed to deepen students' understanding of Indigenous cultures, languages, imagery, traditional knowledge, and contemporary lifestyles through the introduction of Elders, land-based learning, and cultural exploration.

#### Post-Secondary Curricula:

- Supported University College of the North (UCN) in the introduction of *Waskawimikanwa Mecimwaci Isihtwawina*, a required course for every UCN student that introduces students to Indigenous traditional teachings through sharing circles, group activities and actively participating in various culturally based experiences.
- Assisted UCN in conducting Indigenous engagement in multiple areas, including the Certificate in Teaching *Ininimowin* and Indigenous Curriculum Specialists/Project Officers. Manitoba represents UCN on the Manitoba Collaborative Indigenous Education Blueprint.

#### Council of Ministers of Education to maintain commitment to Indigenous education issues:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

#### Community-based youth organizations:

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

### **Youth Programs**

#### **TRC Call to Action: #66**

This Call to Action is directed at the federal government for multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation and share information and best practices for youth programming.

#### **Progress:**

#### Develop community-based youth programs on reconciliation:

- Manitoba partnered with MKO and SCO to develop youth gang prevention coordinators. The Youth Engagement Workers (YEW) will be liaison workers between the various programs and other community agencies. The YEW will engage directly with youth and their families by providing opportunities to learn about the importance of personal, family and community wellness as well as education and employment. Through strategic planning, the projects will provide long-term, viable gang exit planning. The goal of this initiative is to assist Indigenous communities and youth to develop strategies that address personal and social barriers that may be preventing personal and professional growth.

## **Museums and Archives**

### ***TRC Calls to Action:* #67-70**

Although these Calls to Action are directed at the federal government, the Manitoba Government supports the calls relating to:

- reviewing of museum policies and best practices; and
- funding for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.

### **Progress:**

#### Supporting and Reviewing Museum Policies and Programming:

- Launched the "Indigenous Afternoons in the Archives" program in partnership with the Manitoba Indigenous Tuberculosis History Project and the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous People, History, and Archives, University of Winnipeg. Indigenous Afternoons in the Archives welcomes and supports Indigenous researchers, university students and the general public. Enhanced support for Indigenous research is provided through increased Archives staffing and the opportunity to consult with Indigenous history professors. The Archives also offered displays of archival records to increase awareness of varied records documenting Indigenous history. The initiative aims to create a welcoming space and to increase participants' comfort levels with the process of archival research.

#### Funding for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation:

- Committed \$10 million in funding to the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) for the development and opening of the Red River Métis National Heritage Centre. Manitoba subsequently collaborated with the MMF to develop a contribution agreement that would guide how funds were directed and to monitor the project's progress.

## **Missing Children and Burial Information**

### ***TRC Calls to Action:* #71-76**

These Calls to Action are mainly directed at the federal government and relate to identifying and documenting deaths and burial sites related to residential schools.

### **Progress:**

#### Identifying and collecting records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system:

- Created a name index from the Sanatorium Board of Manitoba's Mobile Travelling Clinic records for residential schools. These indexes were shared with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and provide an annual snapshot of Indigenous students at many residential schools in Manitoba and parts of Nunavut. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has identified that this information is critical.

Developing and implementing strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried.

- The Manitoba government and the First Nations, Inuit and Red River Métis Council on Residential Schools (now known as *Maamawi bigiiwewininaanig giniijaanisinaanig* – Anishinaabe for “together we will bring them home”) allocated \$2.5 million to Indigenous governments and organizations to co-develop Indigenous-led approaches to find and memorialize missing children and promote collective healing and reconciliatory action. This fulfils Manitoba’s \$2.5 million commitment to provide funding to begin the collaborative work to identify and memorialize children who did not return home from residential schools, announced in June 2021.

Provisioning appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased:

- Partnered with the Assiniboia Residential School Legacy Group on the construction of a public memorial and commemorative monument at the site of the former Assiniboia Residential School in Winnipeg.

## **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**

### ***TRC Calls to Action: #77-78***

These Calls to Action require all levels of government to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to maintain records and support research relevant to the history of residential schools.

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

## **Commemoration**

### ***TRC Calls to Action: #79-83***

These Calls to Action are directed primarily towards the federal government to:

- develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration;



- establish a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to commemorate residential schools and the children who were lost to their families and communities;
  - honour Survivors, their families and communities; and
  - recognize the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada's history.
- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

## **Media and Reconciliation**

### ***TRC Calls to Action: #84-86***

These actions relate to funding for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, educating journalists on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the:

- History and legacy of residential schools;
  - United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
  - Treaty and Aboriginal rights;
  - Indigenous law; and
  - Aboriginal-Crown relations.
- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to this call.

## **Sports and Reconciliation**

### ***TRC Calls to Action: #87-91***

Sport and recreation are fundamental elements to health and well-being. These Calls to Action address inclusive sports policies, programs, initiatives and Indigenous athletic development.

## **Progress:**

### Inclusive sport policies, programs and initiatives:

- Manitoba provided funding for the 2023 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships. In addition to tournament play, the event included a community space and public outreach with free attendance for families and children from local schools. All 46 games were livestreamed and broadcasted.
- Supported the Manitoba Basketball Hall of Fame & Museum's development of a new exhibit highlighting Indigenous basketball in Canada.

- Supported and delivered a variety of activities in partnership with the Manitoba Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Council, including:
  - Engagement workshops in Indigenous communities as part of the development of Sport Manitoba's Safe Sport Framework; and
  - Indigenous coach development and culturally relevant sport programming through the Aboriginal Coach Module Training program.
- Invested \$376.4K in Indigenous sport development through the Indigenous Supplement of the Canada-Manitoba Sport Participation Bilateral Agreement. Diverse initiatives were undertaken to advance Indigenous sport including professional and leadership development for Indigenous coaches and organization staff, sport discovery programming including traditional games, sport equipment access, and land-based physical education.
- Contributed to the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign, which has received attention across Canada for its success.

## **Business and Reconciliation**

### ***TRC Call to Action: #92***

This Call to Action calls on the corporate sector to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and commit to consultation and relationship building with Indigenous peoples.

### **Progress:**

#### Relationship building, economic opportunities, and benefits in the corporate sector:

- Provided \$451K over two years for the Economic Development Reconciliation through Tourism initiative. This initiative aims to support and advance economic reconciliation by creating and expanding tourism economic development projects with Indigenous nations while supporting self-determination. Indigenous tourism provides economic opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and communities such as job creation, capacity building, and visitors supporting other local Indigenous businesses in the area. Indigenous Tourism Manitoba's first membership drive closed on March 31, 2023, which recruited 73 members.

- Economic opportunities through the Communities Economic Development Fund (CEDF):
  - provided funding for a Norway House Fisherman's Co-op feasibility report on a greenhouse gas reduction project. CEDF secured the services of Carbon Block, a Manitoba based environmental technology firm, to complete the study;
  - provided financial assistance to Aurora Sacred Healing, which focuses on outdoor ecotourism connections and land-based Indigenous education partnerships with First Nation organizations. The CEDF funding contributed to their expansion into snow shoeing to add to their shoulder season offerings;
  - through PrairiesCan Tourism Relief Fund project, provided planning support to Sayisi Dene First Nation for the assessment of the feasibility and tourism options for a Sayisi Dene Community Cultural Centre, and
  - through the Look North initiative, coordinated presentations with ColdAcre and Tataskweyak Cree Nation, Cross Lake First Nation and Bunibonibee Cree Nation. Funding for these communities to purchase 10 units of food growing systems.
- Manitoba funds the Industry Partnerships Program, which supports seven strategic and regional economic development organizations. Organizations are expected to engage with Indigenous organizations and highlight the strength of Indigenous contributions to the Manitoba economy. A long-term outcome of the initiative is to advance the spirit and intent of economic reconciliation.
- \$360K was allocated in 2022/23 for a two-year pilot initiative to increase forestry related opportunities for Norway House Cree Nation to support natural resource economic development (a total of \$540K in 2022/23 and 2023/24).

## **Newcomers to Canada**

### ***TRC Calls to Action:* #93-94**

These calls to action include:

- revising the citizenship test to reflect an inclusive history of the Indigenous peoples in Canada;
- revising the information kits provided to immigrants; and
- amending the Oath of Citizenship.

These Calls to Action are federal responsibility and not directed specifically to the Manitoba Government; there have been no actions identified under these calls.

## **Addressing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – New Initiatives**

Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations, with support from Manitoba Status of Women and other departments, is leading the work that forms the basis of Manitoba's response to the National Inquiry and Calls for Justice (CFJ), under the umbrella of Manitoba's Gender-Based Violence Committee of Cabinet.

Manitoba is working to develop a concrete and effective response to the National Inquiry that builds on work that is underway at the community-level and aligns with the main pillars of Manitoba's Framework for Addressing Gender-Based Violence, which are:

1. Prevention
2. Support
3. Intervention

In 2022/23, Manitoba supported the establishment of Giganawenimaanaanig, an Indigenous-led committee that works strategically to implement the MMIWG Calls for Justice in a culturally-relevant way in Manitoba. This grassroots project is guided by a traditional Indigenous matriarchal governing body, comprised of Knowledge Keepers, Elders, MMIWG2S+ family members, survivors of gender-based violence and Indigenous experts.

The ongoing work of Giganawenimaanaanig includes public education awareness to institutions on the 231 Calls for Justice and implementation processes, support for families whose loved ones are believed to be in the landfill, Search the Landfill initiatives, representation on the National Urban MMIWG table, and partnership meetings.

In early 2023, Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations, the Manitoba Office of the Fire Commissioner, and Manitoba Environment and Climate Change supported the Landfill Search Feasibility Study Committee and the Technical Subcommittee as ex-officio, non-voting members. The feasibility study was overseen by a committee led by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Long Plain First Nation, and co-chaired by other affected parties. Manitoba provided both technical and human resources support to this initiative.

Manitoba is pursuing a wide variety of more immediate activities that align with the CFJ and support efforts to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. Initiatives are grouped under the three main pillars listed above.

## **Prevention**

- Under *Manitoba's Framework: Addressing Gender-Based Violence*, Gender Equity Manitoba worked with Manitoba Justice on the development of Clare's Law legislation. This work involved bringing together a working group of community service organizations, police agencies, and government representatives to co-design a made-in-Manitoba approach to disclosing information to people at risk of intimate partner violence. In November 2022, Manitoba passed Clare's Law in *The Disclosure to Protect Against Intimate Partner Violence Act*, which allows intimate partners to access information on documented history of violence to inform risk assessment, safety planning and safer relationship transitions. Work is underway to develop a disclosure protocol in consultation with community, police, shelters and privacy experts.
- Provided funding to support the EmpowerMen Project, a pilot project aiming to prevent the sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. Through a combination of workshops, online strategies, support services and engagement with law enforcement agencies as well as the corporate sector, this community-led program educates men and boys about the demand-side of sexual exploitation and its harms and uses technology to deter purchasing of sexual acts.
- The Department of Families allocated \$144K in 2022/23 for the Addressing Demand Program aimed at engaging men and boys to develop solutions to reduce sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

## **Support**

- Working collaboratively with Community Family Liaison Contacts (CFLC). These contacts connect with families in communities at a grassroots level and bridge information sharing between families and the CFLCs employed through Victim Services. CFLC is also offered through MKO in Thompson. Through Manitoba's federal Family Information Liaison Unit agreement, support is provided to MKO for their annual healing gathering for family members of MMIWG2S+ in Thompson.

## **Intervention**

- In 2022/23, there were no new initiatives that build on past efforts pertaining to this pillar.

## **Other Reconciliatory Actions**

Each year, the Manitoba Government implements and supports a number of initiatives that further reconciliation beyond the TRC's Calls to Action and the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice. Highlights of new initiatives that support reconciliation include:

### **Climate and Environment**

- Delivered six Indigenous engagement events with 125 participants from 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba about how a changing climate impacts First Nations, their livelihoods and what information and other resources are needed to be more prepared for future changes. From those engagements, Manitoba heard that flooding and warmer winter temperatures were the most common impacts affecting communities in recent memory. Wildfires, heatwaves, and erosion were also key impacts in many communities represented. Communities asked for better communication and engagement about climate vulnerabilities and risks, as well as funding opportunities and resources. These engagements will inform future provincial climate adaptation planning and related initiatives.

### **Health and Wellness**

- Partnered with the Northern Manitoba Food Culture and Community Collaborative to facilitate two Indigenous-led food system knowledge sharing events. These events aimed to facilitate the incorporation of traditional knowledge into modern food systems and increase the production of sustainable, local, and culturally appropriate food within Indigenous communities. The events also created space for idea-sharing and co-learning for people who run country food programs or aspire to run such programs in northern communities.
- Launched a three-year, \$350K, funding agreement to support an Indigenous Elder In-Residence term position in the Department of Agriculture to incorporate traditional knowledge into modern food systems, and to support the production of sustainable, local, and culturally appropriate food within communities.

- An Elder was hired for the Norway House Cree Nation Country Food Program and attended an Indigenous knowledge sharing event that included Elders and youth representatives from 10 First Nations communities. The Elder has begun developing partnerships with First Nations communities, organizing outreach activities in the community, supporting Agriculture department staff to review the Indigenous program applications through a culturally appropriate lens, and working across the department to support meeting reconciliation targets relating to agriculture and food systems.
- Provided \$750K in funding to the Winnipeg Humane Society for the One Health Program, which provides veterinary services in remote and Indigenous communities across Manitoba. Many Indigenous communities experience dog overpopulation, resulting in public safety and animal health concerns. One Health takes a collaborative approach between health and animal services to address barriers and improve access to veterinary services in Indigenous communities.

### **Housing and Infrastructure**

- Funded 22 affordable housing units with a supportive housing model that provides culturally appropriate housing for vulnerable persons exiting unsheltered homelessness.
- Provided \$492K for two supportive recovery housing projects in Thompson and Brandon.
- Committed to the repair/renovation of 281 existing units in Winnipeg and 16 new units of housing for low-income Indigenous seniors in Thompson.
- Started pilot projects in northern Manitoba to improve access to timely testing through portable laboratories to reduce delays in shipping water samples from remote communities and enhance their capacity to ensure water supply safety.
- Delivered several training webinars for drinking water system operators in Indigenous communities to improve regulatory compliance and reduce the duration and occurrence of boil water advisories.

### **Language and Culture**

- Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) Centralized Services' Winnipeg office invited an Elder to do a smudging ceremony. The ceremony acknowledged the trauma caused

by past approaches to providing EIA services to Indigenous peoples, and set the intention to reframe future services. This ceremony reflects broader efforts taken by the Manitoba Government to look inward at its processes, policies and protocols to identify and remove barriers to reconciliation within government.

### **Safety and Security**

- The Community Safety and Wellbeing Planning Pilot Project delivered in partnership with MKO, SCO and St. Teresa Point First Nation creates opportunities for community driven process whereby communities can reduce crime and other risks using evidenced based responses that address unique local circumstances and the needs of residents.
- As per *The Police Services Amendment Act (Enhancing Independent Investigation Unit Operations)*, the position of Director of Indigenous and Community Relations position has been created within the Department of Justice. The role will enhance engagement between the independent investigation unit (IIU) and Indigenous communities, provide training to Public Safety Division employees (including IIU members), and establish a community liaison program for the IIU. Manitoba is currently consulting with Indigenous organizations on a preferred communications policy when a Final Report by the IIU is to be released.
- In 2022/23 an estimated \$550K was provided to organizations such as Bear Clan Patrol, Candace House, Rossbrook House, Manitoba First Nations Police Service through the Criminal Property Forfeiture Fund.

## **Looking Forward**

Reconciliation is rooted in respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Determining which specific actions should be taken can only be done in a collaborative fashion in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Under new government elected in October 2023, and with a refreshed government structure, departments have been mandated to ensure Indigenous voices are present and heard in conversations about economic development, natural resources, education, environmental protection, child welfare, gender equity, health care, justice, and more.

There remains much work to be done in Manitoba to address truth and reconciliation. The Manitoba Government is taking steps to reset the relationship between the Manitoba



Government and Indigenous governments as partners and leaders in the province and is committed to approaching Indigenous governments on a government-to-government level to advance our shared priorities. Manitobans from all walks of life are ready to embrace reconciliation – this government recognizes that this will involve meaningful engagement and collaboration with Indigenous nations, and is committed to working with them to address the disparities that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Manitoba, and make life better for all Manitobans.

Available in alternate formats upon request